abin Point. Va.

10 miles from Ft Po-
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r Beales; after raco to
Cumy C. H.)

Oct 12th 1864.

Edwin of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote recluse,
Minstrel

THE WREATH;

A SELECTION OF

Elegant Poems

From the best Authors.

Hail queen of thought sublime, propitious power,
Who ere the unbounded waste art joy'd to roam
Led by the Moon *Ode to Melancholy*

HARTFORD:
Published by Silas Andrus,
1824.

THE

WREATH:

A

COLLECTION OF POEMS,

FROM

CELEBRATED ENGLISH AUTHORS.

NEW YORK:

INTED AND SOLD BY JOHNSTONE AND VAN NORDEN.

1824.

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THE MINSTREL;

OR,

The Progress of Genius.

BOOK I.

AH! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar!
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Hath felt the influence of malignant star,
And wag'd with Fortune an eternal war;
Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote hath pin'd alone,
Then dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown.

And yet the languor of inglorious days
Not equally oppressive is to all:
Him, who ne'er listen'd to the voice of praise,
The silence of neglect can ne'er appal.
There are, who, deaf to mad Ambition's call,
Would shrink to hear the obstreperous trump of Fame;
Supremely blest, if to their portion fall
Health, competence, and peace. Nor higher aim
Had *He*, whose simple tale these artless lines proclaim.

The rolls of fame I will not now explore;
Nor need I here describe in learned lay,

How forth *The Minstrel* far'd in days of yore,
Right glad of heart, but homely in array;
His waving locks and beard all hoary gray:
And from his bending shoulder decent hung
His harp, the sole companion of his way,
Which to the whistling wind responsive rung:
And ever as he went some merry lay he sung.

Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of pride,
That a poor villager inspires my strain;
With thee let Pageantry and Power abide:
The gentle Muses haunt the sylvan reign;
Where thro' wild groves at eve the lonely swain
Enraptur'd roams, to gaze on Nature's charms.
They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain,
The parasite their influence never warms,
Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold alarms.

Though richest hues the peacock's plumes adorn,
Yet horror screams from his discordant throat.
Rise, sons of harmony, and hail the morn,
While warbling larks on russet pinions float:
Or seek at noon the woodland scene remote,
Where the gray linnets carol from the hill.
O let them ne'er, with artificial note,
To please a tyrant strain their little bill,
But sing what Heaven inspires, and wander where they will.

Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand;
Nor was perfection made for man below.

Yet all her schemes with nicest art are plann'd,
Good counteracting ill, and gladness wo.
With gold and gems if Chilian mountains glow,
If bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise;
There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow;
Here peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
And freedom fires the soul, and sparkles in the eyes.

Then grieve not, thou, to whom the indulgent Muse
Vouchsafes a portion of celestial fire;
Nor blame the partial Fates, if they refuse
The imperial banquet and the rich attire.
Know thine own worth, and reverence the lyre.
Wilt thou debase the heart which God refin'd?
No; let thy heaven-taught soul to heaven aspire,
To fancy, freedom, harmony, resign;
Ambition's grovelling crew for ever left behind.

Canst thou forego the pure ethereal soul,
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of luxury to loll,
Stung with disease and stupified with spleen;
Fain to implore the aid of Flattery's screen;
Even from thyself thy loathsome heart to hide,
(The mansion then no more of joy serene,)
Where fear, distrust, malevolence, abide,
And impotent desire, and disappointed pride?

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields;

The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven,—
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?

These charms shall work thy soul's eternal health,
And love, and gentleness, and joy, impart;
But these thou must renounce, if lust of wealth
E'er win its way to thy corrupted heart;
For, ah! it poisons like a scorpion's dart;
Prompting th' ungenerous wish, the selfish scheme,
The stern resolve, unmov'd by pity's smart,
The troublous day, and long distressful dream.—
Return, my roving muse, resume thy purpos'd theme.

There liv'd in Gothic days, as legends tell,
A shepherd-swain, a man of low degree;
Whose sires, perchance, in Fairyland might dwell,
Sicilian groves, or vales of Arcady;
But he, I ween, was of the north countrie:*
A nation fam'd for song, and beauty's charms;
Zealous, yet modest; innocent, though free;

* There is hardly an ancient Ballad or Romance wherein a Minstrel or Harper appears, but he is characterized, by way of eminence, to have been "of the North Countrie." It is probable, that under this appellation were formerly comprehended all the provinces to the north of the Trent. See Percey's Essay on the English Minstrels.

Patient of toil; serene amidst alarms;
Inflexible in faith; invincible in arms.

The shepherd-swain of whom I mention made,
On Scotia's mountains fed his little flock;
The sickle, sythe, or plough, he never sway'd;
An honest heart was almost all his stock;
His drink the living water from the rock:
The milky dams supplied his board, and lent
Their kindly fleece to baffle winter's shock;
And he, tho' oft with dust and sweat besprent,
Did guide and guard their wanderings, wheresoe'er
they went.

From labour health, from health contentment springs,
Contentment opes the source of every joy:
He envied not, he never thought of kings:
Nor from those appetites sustain'd annoy,
Which chance may frustrate or indulgence cloy:
Nor fate his calm and humble hopes beguil'd;
He mourn'd no recreant friend, nor mistress coy,
For on his vows the blameless Phœbe smil'd,
And her alone he lov'd, and lov'd her from a child.

No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast,
Nor blasted were their wedded days with strife;
Each season look'd delightful, as it past,
To the fond husband, and the faithful wife.
Beyond the lowly vale of shepherd life
They never roam'd; secure beneath the storm
Which in ambition's lofty land is rife,

Where peace and love are canker'd by the worm
Of pride, each bud of joy industrious to deform.

The wight, whose tale these artless lines unfold,
Was all the offspring of this humble pair.
His birth no oracle or seer foretold:
No prodigy appear'd in earth or air,
Nor aught that might a strange event declare.
You guess each circumstance of Edwin's birth;
The parent's transport and the parent's care;
The gossip's prayer for wealth, and wit and worth;
And one long summer-day of indolence and mirth.

And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy;
Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye:
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaude, nor toy,
Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy.
Silent, when glad; affectionate, though shy;
And now his look was most demurely sad,
And now he laugh'd aloud, yet none knew why:
The neighbours star'd and sigh'd, yet bless'd the lad;
Some deem'd him wondrous wise, and some believ'd him mad.

But why should I his childish feats display?
Concourse, and noise, and toil, he ever fled;
Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps, but to the forest sped,
Or roam'd at large the lonely mountain's head,
Or, where the maze of some bewilder'd stream
To deep untrodden groves his footsteps led,

There would he wander wild, till Phœbus' beam,
Shot from the western cliff, releas'd the weary team.

The exploit of strength, dexterity, or speed,
To him nor vanity nor joy could bring:
His heart, from cruel sport estrang'd, would bleed
To work the wo of any living thing,
By trap, or net; by arrow, or by sling;
These he detested, those he scorn'd to wield:
He wish'd to be the guardian, not the king,
Tyrant far less, or traitor of the field;
And sure the sylvan reign unbloody joy might yield.

Lo! where the stripling, wrapt in wonder, roves
Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine;
And sees, on high, amidst the encircling groves,
From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine:
While waters, woods, and winds, in concert join.
And echo swells the chorus to the skies—
Would Edwin this majestic scene resign
For aught the huntsman's puny craft supplies?
Ah! no: he better knows great Nature's charms to prize.

And oft he trac'd the uplands to survey,
When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn,
The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountain gray,
And lake, dim gleaming, on the smoky lawn;
Far to the west the long, long vale withdrawn,
Where twilight loves to linger for a while;
And now he faintly kens the bounding fawn,

And villager abroad at early toil.—
But, lo! the sun appears! and heaven, earth, ocean, smile.

And oft the craggy cliff he lov'd to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost:
What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
And view th' enormous waste of vapour, toss'd
In billows, lengthening to the horizon round,
Now scoop'd in gulfs, with mountains now emboss'd!
And hear the voice of mirth and song rebound,
Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar profound.

In truth he was a strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle, and each dreadful scene;
In darkness, and in storm, he found delight:
Nor less, than when on ocean wave serene
The southern sun diffus'd his dazzling sheen.
Even sad vicissitude amus'd his soul:
And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wish'd not to control.

"O ye wild groves,—O where is now your bloom?"
(The Muse interprets thus his tender thought—)
"Your flowers, your verdure, and your balmy gloom,
"Of late so grateful in the hour of drought!
"Why do the birds, that song and rapture brought
"To all your bowers, their mansions now forsake:
"Ah! why has fickle chance this ruin wrought?

"For now the storm howls mournful thro' the brake,
"And the dead foliage flies in many a shapeless flake.

"Where now the rill, melodious, pure and cool,
"And meads, with life, and mirth, and beauty crown'd!
"Ah! see the unsightly slime, and sluggish pool,
"Have all the solitary vale imbrown'd;
"Fled each fair form, and mute each melting sound;
"The raven croaks forlorn on naked spray:
"And, hark! the river bursting every mound,
"Down the vale thunders, and with wasteful sway
"Uproots the grove, and rolls the shatter'd rocks away.

"Yet such the destiny of all on earth:
"So flourishes and fades majestic Man:
"Fair is the bud his vernal morn brings forth,
"And fostering gales awhile the nursling fan.
"O smile, ye heavens, serene! ye mildews wan,
"Ye blighting whirlwinds, spare his balmy prime,
"Nor lessen of his life the little span.
"Borne on the swift, tho' silent, wings of Time,
"Old-age comes on apace to ravage all the clime.

"And be it so. Let those deplore their doom,
"Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn:
"But lofty souls, who look beyond the tomb,
"Can smile at Fate, and wonder how they mourn.
"Shall spring to these sad scenes no more return?
"Is yonder wave the sun's eternal bed?—
"Soon shall the orient with new lustre burn,

"And spring shall soon her vital influence shed;
"Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

"Shall I be left abandoned in the dust,
"When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
"Shall Nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
"Bid him, tho' doom'd to perish, hope to live?
"Is it for this fair Virtue oft must strive
"With disappointment, penury, and pain?—
"No; Heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive;
"And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
"Bright thro' the eternal year of Love's triumphant reign."

This truth sublime his simple sire had taught,
In sooth, 'twas almost all the shepherd knew:
No subtle nor superfluous lore he sought,
Nor ever wish'd his Edwin to pursue.
"Let man's own sphere," quoth he, "confine his view,
"Be man's peculiar work his sole delight."
And much and oft he warn'd him to eschew
Falsehood and guile, and aye maintain the right,
By pleasure unsubdued, unawed by lawless might.

"And, from the prayer of Want, and plaint of Wo,
"O never, never turn away thine ear,
"Forlorn in this bleak wilderness below,
"Ah! what were man, should Heaven refuse to hear!
"To others do (the law is not severe)
"What to thyself thou wishest to be done;
"Forgive thy foes; and love thy parents dear,

"And friends and native land; nor those alone;
"All human weal and wo learn thou to make thine own."

See in the rear of the warm sunny shower,
The visionary boy for shelter fly!
For now the storm of summer-rain is o'er,
And cool, and fresh, and fragrant is the sky!
And, lo! in the dark east, expanded high,
The rainbow brightens to the setting sun;
Fond fool, that deem'st the streaming glory nigh,
How vain the chase thine ardour has begun!
'Tis fled afar, ere half thy purpos'd race be run.

Yet could'st thou learn, that thus it fares with age,
When pleasure, wealth, or power, the bosom warms,
This baffled hope might tame thy manhood's rage,
And disappointment of her sting disarm.—
But why should foresight thy fond heart alarm?
Perish the lore that deadens young desire!
Pursue, poor imp, the imaginary charm,
Indulge gay Hope, and Fancy's pleasing fire:
Fancy and Hope too soon shall of themselves expire.

When the long-sounding curfew from afar
Loaded with loud lament the lonely gale,
Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
Lingering and listening, wandered down the vale;
There would he dream of graves, and corses pale;
And ghosts, that to the charnel-dungeon throng,
And drag a length of clanking chain, and wail,

Till silenc'd by the owl's terrific song,
Or blast that shrieks by fits the shuddering isles along.

Or, when the setting moon, in crimson died,
Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,
To haunted stream, remote from man he hied,
Where Fays of yore their revels wont to keep;
And there let Fancy roam at large, till sleep
A vision brought to his entranced sight.
And first, a wildly-murmuring wind 'gan creep,
Shrill to his ringing ear; then tapers bright,
With instantaneous gleam, illum'd the vault of Night.

Anon in view a portal's blazon'd arch
Arose; the trumpet bids the valves unfold,
And forth an host of little warriors march,
Grasping the diamond lance, and targe of gold.
Their look was gentle, their demeanour bold,
And green their helms, and green their silk attire;
And here and there, right venerably old,
The long-rob'd minstrels wake the warbling wire,
And some with mellow breath the martial pipe inspire.

With merriment, and song, and timbrels clear,
A troop of dames from myrtle bowers advance;
The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
And loud enlivening strains provoke the dance;
They meet, they dart away, they wheel askance;
To right, to left, they thrid the flying maze;
Now bound aloft with vigorous spring, then gla

Rapid along: with many-coloured rays
Of tapers, gems, and gold, the echoing forests blaze.

The dream is fled. Proud harbinger of day,
Who scar'dst the vision with thy clarion shrill,
Fell chanticleer! who oft hast 'reft away
My fancied good, and brought substantial ill!
O to thy cursed scream, discordant still,
Let Harmony aye shut her gentle ear:
Thy boastful mirth let jealous rivals spill,
Insult thy crest, and glossy pinions tear,
And ever in thy dreams the ruthless fox appear.

Forbear, my Muse. Let love attune thy line.
Revoke the spell. Thine Edwin frets not so.
For how should he at wicked chance repine,
Who feels from every change amusement flow?
Even now his eyes with smiles of rapture glow,
As on he wanders through the scenes of morn,
Where the fresh flowers in living lustre blow,
Where thousand pearls the dewy lawns adorn,
A thousand notes of joy in every breeze are borne.

But who the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain side;
The lowing herd; the sheepfold's simple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean-tide;

The hum of bees, and linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

The cottage curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crown'd with her pail the tripping mik-maid sings,
The whistling ploughman stalks afield: and hark!
Down the rough slope the ponderous wagon rings;
Through rustling corn the hare astonish'd springs;
Slow tolls the village-clock the drowsy hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequester'd bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aerial tour.

O Nature, how in every charm supreme!
Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new!
O for the voice and fire of seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due!
Blest be the day I 'scaped the wrangling crew,
From Pyrrho's maze, and Epicurus' sty;
And held high converse with the godlike few,
Who to the enraptur'd heart, and ear, and eye,
Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and melody!

Hence! ye, who snare and stupify the mind,
Sophists! of beauty, virtue, joy, the bane!
Greedy and fell though impotent and blind,
Who spread your filthy nets in Truth's fare fane,
And ever ply your venom'd fangs amain!
Hence to dark Error's den, whose rankling slime
First gave your form! hence! lest the Muse should deign

(Tho' loth on theme so mean to waste a rhyme,)
With vengeance to pursue your sacrilegious crime.

But hail, ye mighty masters of the lay,
Nature's true sons, the friends of man and truth!
Whose song, sublimely sweet, serenely gay,
Amus'd my childhood, and inform'd my youth.
O let your spirit still my bosom sooth,
Inspire my dreams, and my wild wanderings guide!
Your voice each rugged path of life can smooth;
For well I know, wherever ye reside,
There harmony, and peace, and innocence, abide.

Ah me! abandon'd on the lonesome plain,
As yet poor Edwin never knew your lore,
Save when against the winter's drenching rain,
And driving snow the cotttage shut the door.
Then, as instructed by tradition hoar,
Her legends when the Beldam 'gan impart,
Or chant the old heroic ditty o'er,
Wonder and joy ran thrilling to his heart:
Much he the tale admir'd, but more the tuneful art.

Various and strange was the long-winded tale;
And halls, and knights, and feats of arms, display'd;
Or merry swains, who quaff the nut-brown ale,
And sing, enamour'd, of the nut-brown maid;
The moon-light revel of the fairy glade;
Or hags, that suckle an infernal brood,

And ply in caves the unutterable trade,*
Midst fiends and spectres, quench the moon in blood,
Yell in the midnight storm, or ride the infuriate flood.

But when to horror his amazement rose,
A gentler strain the Beldam would rehearse,
A tale of rural life, a tale of woes,
The orphan babes, and guardian uncle fierce.
O Cruel! will no pang of pity pierce
That heart by lust of lucre sear'd to stone!
For sure, if aught of virtue last, or verse,
To latest times shall tender souls bemoan
Those helpless orphan-babes by thy fell arts undone.

Behold, with berries smear'd, with brambles torn,†
The babes now famish'd lay them down to die,
'Midst the wild howl of darksome woods forlorn,
Folded in one another's arms they lie;
Nor friend, nor stranger, hears their dying cry;
"For from the town the man returns no more."
But thou, who Heaven's just vengeance dar'st defy,
This deed with fruitless tears shall soon deplore.
When Death lays waste thy house, and flames consume thy store.

A stifled smile of stern vindictive joy
Brighten'd one moment Edwin's starting tear.—

---

* Macbeth. How now, ye secret, black, and midnight hags,
What is't you do?
Witches. A deed without a name.

† See the fine old ballad, called. The Children in the Wood.

"But why should gold man's feeble mind decoy,
"And innocence thus die by doom severe?"
O Edwin! while thy heart is yet sincere,
Th' assaults of discontent and doubt repel:
Dark even at noon-tide is our mortal sphere;
But let us hope—to doubt, is to rebel,—
Let us exult in hope, that all shall yet be well.

Nor be thy generous indignation check'd,
Nor check'd the tender tear to Misery given:
From Guilt's contagious power shall that protect,
This soften and refine the soul for Heaven.
But dreadful is their doom, whom doubt has driven
To censure fate, and pious Hope forego:
Like yonder blasted boughs by lightning riven,
Perfection, beauty, life, they never know,
But frown on all that pass, a monument of wo.

Shall he, whose birth, maturity, and age,
Scarce fill the circle of one summer-day,
Shall the poor gnat with discontent and rage
Exclaim, that Nature hastens to decay,
If but a cloud obstruct the solar ray,
If but a momentary shower descend!
Or shall frail man Heaven's dread decree gainsay,
Which bade the series of events extend
Wide thro' unnumber'd worlds, and ages without end!

One part, one little part, we dimly scan
Thro' the dark medium of life's feverish dream

Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
If but that little part incongruous seem.
Nor is that part perhaps what mortals deem;
Oft from apparent ill our blessings rise.
O then renounce that impious self-esteem,
That aims to trace the secrets of the skies:
For thou art but of dust; be humble, and be wise

Thus Heaven enlarg'd his soul in riper years;
For Nature gave him strength and fire, to soar
On Fancy's wing above this vale of tears;
Where dark cold-hearted skeptics, creeping, pore
Through microscope of metaphysic lore;
And much they grope for truth, but never hit.
For why? their powers, inadequate before,
This art preposterous renders more unfit;
Yet deem they darkness light, and their vain blunders wit.

Nor was this ancient dame a foe to mirth,
Her ballad, jest, and riddle's quaint device,
Oft cheer'd the shepherds round their social hearth;
Whom levity or spleen could ne'er entice
To purchase chat or laughter, at the price
Of decency. Nor let it faith exceed,
That Nature forms a rustic taste so nice.
Ah! had they been of court or city breed,
Such delicacy were right marvellous indeed.

Oft when the winter-storm had ceas'd to rave,
He roam'd the snowy waste at even, to view

The cloud stupendous, from th' Atlantic wave
High-towering, sail along th' horizon blue:
Where 'midst the changeful scenery, ever new,
Fancy a thousand wondrous forms descries,
More wildly great than ever pencil drew.
Rocks, torrents, gulfs, and shapes of giant-size,
And glittering cliffs on cliffs, and fiery ramparts rise.

Thence musing onward to the sounding shore,
The lone enthusiast oft would take his way,
Listening with pleasing dread to the deep roar
Of the wide-weltering waves. In black array
When sulph'rous clouds roll'd on the vernal day,
Even then he hasten'd from the haunt of man,
Along the trembling wilderness to stray,
What time the lightning's fierce career began,
And o'er Heaven's rending arch the rattling thunder ran.

Responsive to the sprightly pipe when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were join'd,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclin'd,
Sooth'd with the soft notes warbling in the wind.
Ah then, all jollity seem'd noise and folly.
To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refin'd,
Ah, what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
When with the charm compared of heavenly melancholy!

Is there a heart that music cannot melt?
Alas! how is that rugged heart forlorn!

Is there, who ne'er those mystic transports felt
Of solitude and melancholy born?
He needs not woo the Muse: he is her scorn.
The sophist's robe of cobweb he shall twine;
Mope o'er the schoolman's peevish page; or mourn,
And delve for life in Mammon's dirty mine;
Sneak with the scoundrel fox, or grunt with glutton swine.

For Edwin, Fate a nobler doom had plann'd;
Song was his favourite and first pursuit.
The wild harp rang to his adventurous hand,
And languish'd to his breast the plaintive flute.
His infant muse, though artless, was not mute;
Of elegance as yet he took no care;
For this of time and culture is the fruit;
And Edwin gain'd at last this fruit so rare;
As in some future verse I purpose to declare.

Meanwhile, whate'er of beautiful or new,
Sublime or dreadful, in earth, sea, or sky;
By chance, or search, was offer'd to his view,
He scann'd with curious and romantic eye.
Whate'er of lore tradition could supply
From Gothic tale, or song, or fable old,
Rous'd him, still keen to listen and to pry.
At last, though long by penury controll'd,
And solitude, his soul her graces 'gan unfold.

Thus on the chill Lapponian's dreary land,
For many a long month lost in snow profound,

When Sol from Cancer sends the season bland,
And in their northern cave the storms are bound;
From silent mountains, straight, with startling sound,
Torrents are hurl'd; green hills emerge; and lo,
The trees with foliage, cliffs with flowers are crown'd;
Pure rills thro' vales of verdure warbling go;
And wonder, love, and joy, the peasant's heart o'erflow.*

Here pause, my Gothic lyre, a little while.
The leisure hour is all that thou canst claim.
But if ***** on this labour smile,
New strains ere long shall animate thy frame.
And his applause to me is more than fame;
For still with truth accords his taste refin'd.
At lucre or renown let others aim,
I only wish to please the gentle mind,
Whom Nature's charms inspire, and love of human kind.

BOOK II.

Of chance or change, O let not man complain,
Else shall he never, never cease to wail:
For from the imperial dome, to where the swain
Rears the lone cottage in the silent dale,
All feel th' assault of Fortune's fickle gale;

* Spring and Autumn are hardly known to the Laplanders. About the time the sun enters Cancer, their fields, which a week before were covered with snow, appear on a sudden full of grass and flowers. Scheffer's History of Lapland, p. 18.

Art, empire, earth itself, to change are doom'd;
Earthquakes have rais'd to heaven the humble vale,
And gulfs the mountain's mighty mass entomb'd,
And where the Atlantic rolls, wide continents have bloom'd.*

But sure to foreign climes we need not range,
Nor search the ancient records of our race,
To learn the dire effects of time and change,
Which in ourselves, alas! we daily trace.
Yet at the darken'd eye, the wither'd face,
Or hoary hair, I never will repine:
But spare, O Time, whate'er of mental grace,
Of candour, love, or sympathy divine,
Whate'er of Fancy's ray, or friendship's flame is mine

So I, obsequious to Truth's dread command,
Shall here without reluctance change my lay,
And smite the Gothic lyre with harsher hand;
Now when I leave that flowery path for aye
Of childhood, where I sported many a day,
Warbling and sauntering carelessly along;
Where every face was innocent and gay,
Each vale romantic, tuneful every tongue,
Sweet, wild, and artless all, as Edwin's infant song.

"Perish the lore that deadens young desire,"
Is the soft tenour of my song no more.
Edwin, tho' lov'd of Heaven, must not aspire

* See Plato's Timæ

To bliss which mortals never knew before.
On trembling wings let youthful fancy soar,
Nor always haunt the sunny realms of joy;
But now and then the shades of life explore,
Though many a sound and sight of wo annoy,
And many a qualm of care his rising hopes destroy.

Vigour from toil, from trouble patience grows.
The weakly blossom, warm in summer bower,
Some tints of transient beauty may disclose;
But, ah! it withers in the chilling hour
Mark yonder oaks! superior to the power
Of all the warring winds of heaven they rise,
And from the stormy promontory tower,
And toss their giant arms amid the skies,
While each assailing blast increase of strength supplies.

And now the downy cheek and deepen'd voice
Gave dignity to Edwin's blooming prime:
And walks of wider circuit were his choice,
And vales more wild, and mountains more sublime.
One evening as he framed the careless rhyme,
It was his chance to wander far abroad,
And o'er a lonely eminence to climb,
Which heretofore his foot had never trode;
A vale appear'd below, a deep retir'd abode.

Thither he hied, enamour'd of the scene;
For rocks on rocks pil'd, as by magic spell,
Here scorch'd with lightning, there with ivy green,
Fenc'd from the north and east this savage dell;

Southward a mountain rose with easy swell,
Whose long, long groves eternal murmur made;
And toward the western sun a streamlet fell,
Where, through the cliffs, the eye remote survey'd
Blue hills, and glittering waves, and skies in gold array'd.

Along this narrow valley you might see
The wild deer sporting on the meadow ground,
And here and there, a solitary tree,
Or mossy stone, or rock with woodbine crown'd.
Oft did the cliffs reverberate the sound
Of parted fragments tumbling from on high;
And from the summit of that craggy mound
The perching eagle oft was heard to cry,
Or on resounding wings to shoot athwart the sky.

One cultivated spot there was, that spread
Its flowery bosom to the noon-day beam,
Where many a rose-bud rears its blushing head,
And herbs for food with future plenty teem.
Sooth'd by the lulling sound of grove and stream,
Romantic visions swarm on Edwin's soul:
He minded not the sun's last trembling gleam,
Nor heard from far the twilight curfew toll;—
When slowly on his ear these moving accents stole.

"Hail, awful scenes, that calm the troubled breast,
"And woo the weary to profound repose;
"Can Passion's wildest uproar lay to rest,
"And whisper comfort to the man of woes!
"Here innocence may wander, safe from foes,

"And Contemplation soar on seraph wings.
"O Solitude, the man who thee foregoes,
"When lucre lure him, or ambition stings,
'Shall never know the source whence real grandeur springs

"Vain man! is grandeur given to gay attire?
"Then let the butterfly thy pride upbraid:
"To friends, attendants, armies bought with hire?
"It is thy weakness that requires their aid:
"To palaces, with gold and gems inlay'd?
"They fear the thief, and tremble in the storm:—
"To hosts through carnage who to conquest wade?
"Behold, the victor vanquish'd by the worm!
"Behold what deeds of wo the locust can perform!

"True dignity is his, whose tranquil mind
"Virtue has rais'd above the things below,
"Who, every hope and fear to Heaven resign'd,
"Shrinks not, though fortune aim her deadliest blow."
—This strain from 'midst the rocks was heard to flow
In solemn sounds. Now beam'd the evening star;
And from embattled clouds emerging slow
Cynthia came riding on her silver car:
And hoary mountain-cliffs shone faintly from afar.

Soon did the solemn voice its theme renew:
(While Edwin wrapt in wonder listening stood;)
"Ye tools and toys of tyranny, adieu,
"Scorn'd by the wise, and hated by the good!
"Ye only can engage the servile brood

"Of Levity and Lust, who all their days,
"Asham'd of truth and liberty, have woo'd,
"And hugg'd the chain, that glittering on their gaze
"Seems to outshine the pomp of heaven's empyreal blaze.

"Like them, abandon'd to Ambition's sway,
"I sought for glory in the paths of guile;
"And fawn'd and smil'd, to plunder and betray,
"Myself betray'd and plunder'd all the while;
"So gnaw'd the viper the corroding file.
"But now with pangs of keen remorse I rue
"Those years of trouble and debasement vile.—
"Yet why should I this cruel theme pursue?
"Fly, fly, detested thoughts, for ever from my view.

"The gusts of appetite, the clouds of care,
"And storms of disappointment all o'erpast,
"Henceforth no earthly hope with Heaven shall share
"This heart, where peace serenely shines at last.
"And if for me no treasure be amass'd,
"And if no future age shall hear my name,
"I lurk the more secure from fortune's blast,
"And with more leisure feed this pious flame,
"Whose rapture far transcends the fairest hopes of fame.

"The end and the reward of toil is rest.
"Be all my prayer for virtue and for peace.
"Of wealth and fame, of pomp and power possess'd,
"Who ever felt his weight of wo decrease?
"Ah! what avails the lore of Rome and Greece,
"The lay heaven-prompted, and harmonious string,

" The dust of Ophir, or the Tyrian fleece,
" All that art, fortune, enterprise can bring,
" If envy, scorn, remorse, or pride the bosom wring!

" Let vanity adorn the marble tomb
" With trophies, rhymes, and scutcheons of renown,
" In the deep dungeon of some Gothic dome,
" Where night and desolation ever frown.
" Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down;
" Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
" With here and there a violet bestrown,
" Fast by a brook, or fountain's murmuring wave;
And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my grave.

" And thither let the village swain repair;
" And, light of heart, the village maiden gay,
" To deck with flowers her half-dishevell'd hair,
" And celebrate the merry morn of May.
" There let the shepherd's pipe the live-long day
" Fill all the grove with love's bewitching wo:
" And when mild Evening comes with mantle gray,
" Let not the blooming band make haste to go,—
No ghost nor spell my long and last abode shall know.

" For though I fly to 'scape from fortune's rage,
" And bear the scars of envy, spite, and scorn,
" Yet with mankind no horrid war I wage,
" Yet with no impious spleen my breast is torn:
" For virtue lost, and ruin'd man, I mourn.
" O Man! creation's pride, heaven's darling child,
" Whom Nature's best, divinest gifts adorn.

"Why from thy home are truth and joy exil'd,
"And all thy favourite haunts with blood and tears de
fil'd!

"Along yon glittering sky what glory streams!
"What majesty attends night's lovely queen!
"Fair laugh our valleys in the vernal beams;
"And mountains rise, and oceans roll between,
"And all conspire to beautify the scene.
"But, in the mental world, what chaos drear!
"What forms of mournful, loathsome, furious mien?
"O when shall that Eternal Morn appear,
"These dreadful forms to chase, this chaos dark to clear!

"O Thou, at whose creative smile, yon heaven,
"In all the pomp of beauty, life and light,
"Rose from the abyss; when dark confusion, driven
"Down, down the bottomless profound of night,
"Fled, where he ever flies thy piercing sight!
"O glance on these sad shades one pitying ray.
"To blast the fury of oppressive might,
"Melt the hard heart to love and mercy's sway,
"And cheer the wandering soul, and light him on the
way."

Silence ensued: and Edwin rais'd his eyes
In tears, for grief lay heavy at his heart.
"And is it thus in courtly life," he cries,
"That man to man acts a betrayer's part?
"And dares he thus the gifts of heaven pervert,
"Each social instinct and sublime desire!—

"Hail, Poverty! if honour, wealth, and art,
"If what the great pursue, and learn'd admire,
"Thus dissipate and quench the soul's ethereal fire!"

He said, and turn'd away; nor did the Sage
O'erhear, in silent orisons employ'd.
The Youth, his rising sorrow to assuage,
Home as he hied, the evening scene enjoy'd;
For now no cloud obscures the starry void;
The yellow moonlight sleeps on all the hills;
Nor is the mind with starting sounds annoy'd,
A soothing murmur the lone region fills
Of groves, and dying gales, and melancholy rills.

But he from day to day more anxious grew,
The voice still seem'd to vibrate on his ear,
Nor durst he hope the Hermit's tale untrue;
For Man he seem'd to love, and Heaven to fear;
And none speaks false, where there is none to hear.
"Yet can man's gentle heart become so fell!
"No more in vain conjecture let me wear
"My hours away, but seek the Hermit's cell;
"'Tis he my doubt can clear, perhaps my care dispel."

At early dawn the Youth his journey took,
And many a mountain pass'd, and valley wide,
Then reach'd the wild; where in a flowery nook,
And seated on a mossy stone, he spied
An ancient man: his harp lay him beside.
A stag sprang from the pasture at his call,

And, kneeling, lick'd the wither'd hand that tied
A wreath of woodbine round his antlers tall,
And hung his lofty neck with many a flow'ret small.

And now the hoary Sage arose, and saw
The wanderer approaching: innocence
Smil'd on his glowing cheek, but modest awe
Depress'd his eye, that fear'd to give offence.
"Who art thou, courteous stranger? and from whence?
"Why roam thy steps to this abandoned dale?"
"A shepherd-boy," the Youth replied, "far hence
"My habitation: hear my artless tale;
"Nor levity nor falsehood shall thine ear assail.

"Late as I roam'd, intent on Nature's charms,
"I reach'd at eve this wilderness profound;
"And, leaning where yon oak expands her arms,
"Heard these rude cliffs thine awful voice rebound;
"(For in thy speech I recognise the sound.)
"You mourn'd for ruined man, and virtue lost,
"And seem'd to feel of keen remorse the wound,
"Pondering on former days, by guilt engross'd,
"Or in the giddy storm of dissipation toss'd.

"But say, in courtly life can craft be learn'd,
"Where knowledge opens and exalts the soul?
"Where fortune lavishes her gifts unearn'd,
"Can selfishness the liberal heart control?
"Is glory there achiev'd by arts as foul
"As those which felons, fiends, and furies plan?

"Spiders ensnare, snakes poison, tigers prowl;
"Love is the godlike attribute of man.
"O teach a simple youth this mystery to scan.

"Or else the lamentable strain disclaim,
"And give me back the calm, contented mind;
"Which, late exulting, view'd in Nature's frame
"Goodness untainted, wisdom unconfin'd,
"Grace, grandeur, and utility combin'd;
"Restore those tranquil days that saw me still
"Well pleas'd with all, but most with human-kind;
"When Fancy roam'd through Nature's works at will
"Uncheck'd by cold distrust, and uninform'd of ill."

"Wouldst thou," the Sage replied, "in peace return,
"To the gay dreams of fond romantic youth,
"Leave me to hide, in this remote sojourn,
"From every gentle ear the dreadful truth:
"For if my desultory strain with ruth
"And indignation make thine eyes o'erflow,
"Alas! what comfort could thy anguish sooth,
"Should'st thou the extent of human folly know?
"Be ignorance thy choice, where knowledge leads to

"But let untender thoughts afar be driven;
"Nor venture to arraign the dread decree:
"For know, to man, as candidate for heaven,
"The voice of The Eternal said, Be free,
"And this divine prerogative to thee
"Does virtue, happiness, and heaven convey;

"For virtue is the child of liberty,
"And happiness of virtue; nor can they
"Be free to keep the path who are not free to stray.

"Yet leave me not. I would allay that grief,
"Which else might thy young virtue overpower;
"And in thy converse I shall find relief,
"When the dark shades of melancholy lower;
"For solitude has many a dreary hour,
"Even when exempt from grief, remorse, and pain;
"Come often then; for, haply, in my bower,
"Amusement, knowledge, wisdom, thou may'st gain.
"If I one soul improve I have not liv'd in vain."

And now, at length to Edwin's ardent gaze
The Muse of history unrolls her page.
But few, alas! the scenes her art displays,
To charm his fancy, or his heart engage.
Here chiefs their thirst of power in blood assuage;
And straight their flames with tenfold fierceness burn!
Here smiling Virtue prompts the patriot's rage,
But, lo! ere long, is left alone to mourn,
And languish in the dust, and clasp the abandon'd urn.

"Ah! what avails," he said, "to trace the springs
"That whirl of empire, the stupendous wheel!
"Ah! what have I to do with conquering kings,
"Hands drench'd in blood, and breasts begirt with steel!
"To those, whom Nature taught to think and feel,
"Heroes, alas! are things of small concern.

" Could History man's secret heart reveal,
" And what imports a heaven-born mind to learn,
" Her transcripts to explore what bosom would not yearn!

" This praise, O Cheronean Sage,* is thine.
" (Why should this praise to thee alone belong!)
" All else from Nature's moral path decline,
" Lur'd by the toys that captivate the throng;
" To herd in cabinets and camps, among
" Spoil, carnage, and the cruel pomp of pride;
" Or chant of heraldry the drowsy song,
" How tyrant blood, o'er many a region wide,
" Rolls to a thousand thrones its execrable tide.

" O who of man the story will unfold,
" Ere victory and empire wrought annoy,
" In that Elysian age, (misnam'd of gold,)
" The age of love, and innocence, and joy,
" When all were great and free! man's sole employ
" To deck the bosom of his parent earth;
" Or toward his bower the murmuring stream decoy,
" To aid the floweret's long-expected birth,
" And lull the bed of peace, and crown the board of mirth.

" Sweet were your shades, O ye primeval groves,
" Whose boughs to man his food and shelter lent,
" Pure in his pleasures, happy in his loves,
" His eye still smiling, and his heart content;
" Then, hand in hand, Health, Sport, and Labour went.

* Plutarch.

"Nature supplied the wish she sought to crave,
"None prowl'd for prey, none watch'd to circumvent;
"To all an equal lot Heaven's bounty gave:
"No vassal fear'd his lord, no tyrant fear'd his slave.

But, ah! th' Historic Muse has never dar'd
To pierce those hallow'd bowers; 'tis Fancy's beam
"Pour'd on the vision of th' enraptur'd Bard.
"That paints the charms of that delicious theme
"Then hail, sweet Fancy's ray! and hail the dream
"That weans the weary soul from guilt and wo!
"Careless what others of my choice may deem,
"I long where Love and Fancy lead to go,
"And meditate on Heaven: enough of earth I know."

"I cannot blame thy choice," the Sage replied,
"For soft and smooth are Fancy's flowery ways.
"And yet even there, if left without a guide,
"The young adventurer unsafely plays.
"Eyes dazzled long by Fiction's gaudy rays,
"In modest truth no light nor beauty find.
"And who, my child, would trust the meteor-blaze,
"That soon must fail, and leave the wanderer blind,
"More dark and helpless far, than if it ne'er had shin'd?

"Fancy enervates, while it sooths, the heart;
"And while it dazzles, wounds the mental sight:
"To joy each heightening charm it can impart,
"But wraps the hour of wo in tenfold night:
"And often, where no real ills affright,
"Its visionary fiends, an endless train,

" Assail with equal or superior might,
" And through the throbbing heart, and dizzy brain,
"And shivering nerves, shoot stings of more than mortal pain.

" And yet, alas! the real ills of life
" Claim the full vigour of a mind prepar'd,—
" Prepar'd for patient, long, laborious strife,
" Its guide Experience, and Truth its guard.
" We fare on earth as other men have far'd:
" Were they successful? Let not us despair.
" Was disappointment oft their sole reward?
" Yet shall their tale instruct, if it declare
" How they have borne the load ourselves are doom'd to bear.

" What charms the Historic Muse adorn, from spoils,
" And blood, and tyrants, when she wings her flight,
" To hail the patriot Prince, whose pious toils,
" Sacred to science, liberty, and right,
" And peace, through every age divinely bright
" Shall shine, the boast and wonder of mankind:
" Sees yonder sun, from his meridian height,
" A lovelier scene, than Virtue thus enshrin'd
" In power, and man with man for mutual aid combin'd?

" Hail, sacred Polity, by Freedom rear'd!
" Hail, sacred Freedom, when by Law restrain'd!
" Without you what were man? A grovelling herd,
" In darkness, wretchedness, and want enchain'd.
" Sublim'd by you the Greek and Roman reign'd

"In arts unrivall'd: O, to latest days,
"In Albion may your influence unprofan'd
"To godlike worth the generous bosom raise,
"And prompt the Sage's lore, and fire the Poet's lays!

"But now let other themes our care engage,
"For, lo! with modest yet majestic grace,
"To curb Imagination's lawless rage,
"And from within the cherish'd heart to brace,
"Philosophy appears. The gloomy race
"By indolence and moping Fancy bred,
"Fear, Discontent, Solicitude, give place,
"And Hope and Courage brighten in their stead,
"While on the kindling soul her vital beams are shed.

"Then waken from long lethargy to life*
"The seeds of happiness, and powers of thought;
"Then jarring appetites forego their strife,
"A strife by ignorance to madness wrought.
"Pleasure by savage man is dearly bought
"With fell revenge, lust that defies control,
"With gluttony and death. The mind untaught
"Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempests howl;
"As Phœbus to the world, is science to the soul.

"And reason now, through number, time, and space,
"Darts the keen lustre of her serious eye,

* The influence of the Philosophic Spirit, in humanizing the mind, and preparing it for intellectual exertion, and delicate pleasure;—in exploring, by the help of geometry, the system of the universe;—in banishing superstition;—in promoting navigation, agriculture, medicine, and moral and political science;—from this Stanza to the end of the second Stanza, Page 47

"And learns, from facts compar'd, the laws to trace,
"Whose long progression leads to Deity.
"Can mortal strength presume to soar so high?
"Can mortal sight so oft bedimm'd with tears,
"Such glory bear?—for lo! the shadows fly
"From Nature's face; Confusion disappears,
"And order charms the eyes, and harmony the ears.

"In the deep windings of the grove no more
"The hag obscene, and grisly phantom dwell;
"Nor in the fall of mountain-stream, or roar
"Of winds, is heard the angry spirit's yell;
"No wizard mutters the tremendous spell,
"Nor sinks convulsive in prophetic swoon;
"Nor bids the noise of drums and trumpets swell,
"To ease of fancied pangs the labouring moon,
"Or chase the shade that blots the blazing orb of noon.

"Many a long lingering year, in lonely isle,
"Stunn'd with the eternal turbulence of waves,
"Lo, with dim eyes that never learn'd to smile,
"And trembling hands, the famish'd native craves
"Of Heaven his wretched fare: shivering in caves,
"Or scorch'd on rocks, he pines from day to day;
"But Science gives the word; and lo, he braves
"The surge and tempest, lighted by her ray,
"And to a happier land wafts merrily away.

"And even where Nature loads the teeming plain
"With the full pomp of vegetable store,
"Her bounty, unimprov'd is deadly bane:

" Dark woods and rankling wilds, from shore to shore
" Stretch their enormous gloom; which to explore
" Even Fancy trembles in her sprightliest mood:
" For there each eye-ball gleams with lust of gore,
" Nestles each murderous and each monstrous brood,
" Plague lurks in every shade, and streams from every flood.

"'Twas from Philosophy man learned to tame
" The soil, by plenty to intemperance fed.
" Lo! from the echoing axe, and thundering flame
" Poison and plague and yelling rage are fled.
" The waters bursting from their slimy bed,
" Bring health and melody to every vale:
" And from the breezy main and mountain's head
" Ceres and Flora, to the sunny dale,
" To fan ther glowing charms, invite the fluttering gale.

" What dire necessities on every hand
" Our art, our strength, our fortitude require!
" Our foes intestine what a numerous band
" Against the little throb of life conspire!
" Yet Science can elude their fatal ire
" Awhile, and turn aside Death's levell'd dart,
" Sooth the sharp pang, allay the fever's fire,
" And brace the nerves once more, and cheer the heart,
" And yet a few soft nights and balmy days impart.

" Nor less to regulate man's mortal frame
" Science exerts her all-composing sway.
" Flutters thy breast with fear, or pants for fame,

"Or pines, to Indolence and Spleen a prey,
"Or Avarice, a fiend more fierce than they?
"Flee to the shades of Academus' grove;
"Where cares molest not! discord melts away
"In harmony, and the pure passions prove
"How sweet the words of truth breath'd from the lips of love.

"What cannot Art and Industry perform,
"When Science plains the progress of their toil!
"They smile at penury, disease, and storm:
"And oceans form their mighty mounds recoil.
"When tyrants scourge, or demagogues embroil
"A land, or when the rabble's headlong rage
"Order transforms to anarchy and spoil,
"Deep-vers'd in man, the philosophic Sage
"Prepares with lenient hand their frenzy to assuage.

"'Tis he alone, whose comprehensive mind,
"From situation, temper, soil, and clime
"Explor'd, a nation's various powers can bind
"And various orders, in one form sublime
"Of polity, that midst the wrecks of time,
"Secure shall lift its head on high, nor fear
"Th' assault of foreign or domestic crime,
"While public faith, and public love sincere,
"And Industry and law maintain their sway severe."

Enraptur'd by the Hermit's strain, the Youth
Proceeds the path of Science to explore.
And now, expanding to the beams of Truth,

New energies, and charms unknown before,
His mind discloses: Fancy now no more
Wantons on fickle pinion through the skies;
But, fix'd in aim, and conscious of her power,
Sublime from cause to cause exults to rise,
Creation's blended stores arranging as she flies.

Nor love of novelty alone inspires,
Their laws and nice dependencies to scan;
For mindful of the aids that life requires,
And of the services man owes to man,
He meditates new arts on Nature's plan,
The cold desponding breast of Sloth to warm,
The flame of Industry and Genius fan,
And Emulation's noble rage alarm,
And the long hours of Toil and Solitude to charm.

But she, who set on fire his infant heart;
And all his dreams, and all his wandering shar'd,
And bless'd the Muse, and her celestial art,
Still claim'd th' Enthusiast's fond and first regard.
From Nature's beauties variously compar'd
And variously combin'd he learns to frame
Those forms of bright perfection, which the Bard,
While boundless hopes and boundless views inflame,
Enamour'd consecrates to never-dying-fame.

Of late, with cumbersome, tho' pompous show,
Edwin would oft his flowery rhyme deface
Through ardour to adorn; but Nature now
To his experienc'd eye a modest grace

Presents, where Ornament the second place
Holds, to intrinsic worth and just design
Subservient still. Simplicity apace
Tempers his rage: he owns her charm divine,
And clears the ambiguous phrase, and lops the unwieldly line.

Fain would I sing (much yet unsung remains)
What sweet delirium o'er his bosom stole
When the great Shepherd of the Mantuan plains*
His deep majestic melody 'gan roll:
Fain would I sing, what transport storm'd his soul,
How the red current throbb'd his veins along,
When, like Pelides, bold beyond control,
Gracefully terrible, sublimely strong,
Homer rais'd high to Heaven the loud, th' impetuous song.

And how his lyre, though rude her first essays,
Now skill'd to sooth, to triumph, to complain,
Warbling at will through each harmonious maze,
Was taught to modulate the artful strain,
I fain would sing:—but ah! I strive in vain.
Sighs from a breaking heart my voice confound.—
With trembling step, to join yon weeping train
I haste, where gleams funereal glare around,
And, mix'd with shrieks of wo, the knells of death resound.

Adieu, ye lays, that Fancy's flowers adorn,
The soft amusement of the vacant mind!

---

* Virgil.

He sleeps in dust, and all the Muses mourn,
He, whom each Virtue fir'd, each Grace refin'd,
Friend, Teacher, pattern, darling of mankind!—*
He sleeps in dust.—Ah, how should I pursue
My theme!—To heart-consuming grief resign'd,
Here on his recent grave I fix my view,
And pour my bitter tears.—Ye flowery lays adieu!

Art thou, my G*******, for ever fled!
And am I left to unavailing wo!
When fortune's storms assail this weary head,
Where cares long since have shed untimely snow,
Ah! now for comfort whither shall I go?
No more thy soothing voice my anguish cheers:
Thy placid eyes with smiles no longer glow,
My hopes to cherish, and allay my fears.
'Tis meet that I should mourn: flow forth afresh my tears.

* This excellent person died suddenly, on the 10th of February, 1773. The conclusion of the poem was written a few days after.

THE GRAVE.

The house appointed for all living. JOB.

WHILST some affect the sun, and some the shade,
Some flee the city, some the hermitage,
Their aims as various as the roads they take
In journeying through life; the task be mine
To paint the gloomy horrors of the *tomb;*
The appointed place of rendezvous, where all
These travellers meet. Thy succours I implore,
Eternal King! whose potent arm sustains
The keys of hell and death.—The Grave, dread thing!
Men shiver when thou'rt nam'd: Nature appall'd
Shakes off her wonted firmness. Ah! how dark
Thy long-extended realms and rueful wastes;
Where nought but silence reigns, and night, dark night,
Dark as was Chaos ere the infant Sun
Was roll'd together, or had tried its beams
Athwart the gloom profound! The sickly taper,
By glimmering through thy low-brow'd misty vaults,
Furred round with mouldy damps, and ropy slime,
Lets fall a supernumerary horror,
And only serves to make thy night more irksome.
Well do I know thee by thy trusty yew,
Cheerless, unsocial plant! that loves to dwell

'Midst sculls and coffins epitaphs, and worms;
Where light-heel'd ghosts, and visionary shades
Beneath the wan cold moon (as fame reports)
Embodied thick, perform their mystic rounds.
No other merriment, dull tree! is thine.
See yonder hallow'd fane! the pious work
Of names once fam'd, now dubious or forgot,
And buried 'midst the wreck of things which were:
There lie interr'd the more illustrious dead.
The wind is up: hark! how it howls! Methinks,
Till now, I never heard a sound so dreary;
Doors creak, and windows clap, and night's foul bird
Rook'd in the spire screams loud; the gloomy ailes
Black plaster'd, and hung round with shreds of scutcheons,
And tatter'd coats of arms, send back the sound
Laden with heavier airs, from the low vaults,
The mansions of the dead. Rous'd from their slumbers,
In grim array the grisly spectres rise,
Grin horrible, and obstinately sullen
Pass and repass, hush'd as the foot of night.
Again! the screech owl shrieks: ungracious sound!
I'll hear no more; it makes one's blood run chill.
Quite round the pile, a row of rev'rend elms,
Coeval near with that, all ragged show,
Long lash'd by the rude winds: some rift half down
Their branchless trunks; others so thin a-top,
That scarce two crows could lodge in the same tree.
Strange things, the neighbours say, have happen'd here:
While shrieks have issued from the hollow tombs,
Dead men have come again, and walk'd about;
And the great bell has toll'd, unrung, untouch'd.

Such tales their cheer, at wake or gossiping,
When it draws near to witching-time of night.
Oft in the lone church-yard at night I've seen,
By glimpse of moon-shine, cheq'ring through the trees,
The school-boy, with his satchel in his hand,
Whistling aloud to bear his courage up,-
And lightly tripping o'er the long flat stones
(With nettles skirted, and with moss o'ergrown)
That tell in homely phrase who lie below;
Sudden he starts! and hears, or thinks he hears,
The sound of something purring at his heels:
Full fast he flies, and dares not look behind him,
Till out of breath he overtakes his fellows;
Who gather round, and wonder at the tale
Of horrid apparition, tall and ghastly,
That walks at dead of night, or takes his stand
O'er some new-opened grave: and, strange to tell!
Evanishes at crowing of the cock.
The new-made widow too I've sometimes spied;
Sad sight! slow-moving o'er the prostrate dead!
Listless she crawls along in doleful black,
While bursts of sorrow gush from either eye,
Fast-falling down her now untasted cheek.
Prone on the lonely grave of the dear man
She drops: while busy meddling memory
In barbarous succession, musters up
The past endearments of their softer hours,
Tenacious of its theme. Still, still she thinks
She sees him, and indulging the fond thought,
Clings yet more closely to the senseless turf,
Nor heeds the passenger who looks that way.

Invidious Grave! how dost thou rend in sunder
Whom love has knit, and sympathy made one!
A tie more stubborn far than nature's band.
Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul!
Sweet'ner of life, and solder of society!
I owe thee much. Thou hast deserv'd from me
Far, far beyond what I can ever pay.
Oft have I prov'd the labours of thy love,
And the warm efforts of the gentle heart
Anxious to please. O! when my friend and I
In some thick wood have wander'd heedless on,
Hid from the vulgar eye, and sat us down
Upon the sloping cowslip-cover'd bank,
Where the pure limpid stream has slid along
In grateful errors through the underwood
Sweet murm'ring; methought the shrill-tongu'd thrush
Mended his song of love; the sooty blackbird
Mellow'd his pipe, and softened every note;
The eglantine smell'd sweeter, and the rose
Assum'd a dye more deep; whilst every flower
Vied with his fellow plant in luxury
Of dress. Oh! then the longest summer's day
Seem'd too, too much in haste: still the full heart
Had not imparted half: 'tis happiness
Too exquisite to last. Of joys departed,
Not to return, how painful the remembrance!
Dull Grave! thou spoil'st the dance of youthful blood,
Strick'st out the dimple from the cheek of mirth,
And every smirking feature from the face;
Branding our laughter with the name of madness.
Where are the jesters now? the man of health

Complexionally pleasant? where the droll?
Whose every look and gesture was a joke
To clapping theatres and shouting crowds,
And made ev'n thick-lipp'd musing Melancholy
To gather up her face into a smile
Before she was aware? Ah! sullen now,
And dumb as the green turf that covers them!
Where are the mighty thunderbolts of war?
The Roman Cæsars and the Grecian chiefs,
The boast of story? Where the hot-brain'd youth,
Who the tiara at his pleasure tore
From kings of all the then discover'd globe,
And cried, forsooth, because his arm was hamper'd,
And had not room enough to do its work?
Alas! how slim, dishonourably slim!
And cramm'd into a space we blush to name.
Proud royalty! how alter'd in thy looks!
How blank thy features, and how wan thy hue!
Son of the morning! whither art thou gone?
Where hast thou hid thy many-spangled head,
And the majestic menace of thine eyes
Felt from afar? Pliant and powerless now,
Like new-born infant bound up in his swathes,
Or victim tumbled flat upon his back,
That throbs beneath the sacrificer's knife:
Mute must thou bear the strife of little tongues,
And coward insults of the base-born crowd,
That grudge a privilege thou never hadst,
But only hop'd for in the peaceful Grave,
Of being unmolested and alone.
Araby's gums and odoriferous drugs,

And honours by the heralds duly paid
In mode and form, ev'n to a very scruple;
O cruel irony! these come too late;
And only mock whom they were meant to honour.
Surely, there's not a dungeon-slave that's buried
In the highway, unshrouded and uncoffin'd,
But lies as soft, and sleeps as sound as he.
Sorry pre-eminence of high descent
Above the vulgar-born, to rot in state!
But see! the well-plum'd hearse comes nodding on,
Stately and slow; and properly attended
By the whole sable tribe, that painful watch
The sick man's door, and live upon the dead,
By letting out their persons by the hour
To mimic sorrow, when the heart's not sad!
How rich the trappings, now they're all unfurl'd
And glittering in the sun! Triumphant entries
Of conquerors, and coronation pomps,
In glory scarce exceed. Great gluts of people
Retard the unwieldy show; whilst from the casements
And houses' tops, ranks behind ranks close wedg'd,
Hang bellying o'er. But tell us, why this waste?
Why this ado in earthing up a carcass
That's fall'n into disgrace, and in the nostril
Smells horrible? Ye undertakers! tell us,
'Midst all the gorgeous figures you exhibit,
Why is the principal conceal'd, for which
You make this mighty stir? 'Tis wisely done:
What would offend the eye in a good picture,
The Painter casts discreetly into shades.
Proud lineage, now how little thou appear'st!

Below the envy of the private man!
Honour, that meddlesome officious ill,
Pursues thee even to death; nor there stops short.
Strange persecution! when the grave itself
Is no protection from rude sufferance.
Absurd! to think to over-reach the grave,
And from the wreck of names to rescue ours!
The best concerted schemes men lay for fame
Die fast away: only themselves die faster.
The far-fam'd sculptor, and the laurell'd bard,
Those bold ensurers of eternal fame,
Supply their little feeble aids in vain.
The tapering pyramid, the Egyptian's pride,
And wonder of the world! whose spiky top
Has wounded the thick cloud, and long outliv'd
The angry shaking of the winter's storm;
Yet spent at last by th' injuries of heaven,
Shatter'd with age, and furrow'd o'er with years,
The mystic cone, with hieroglyphics crusted,
Gives way. O lamentable sight! at once
The labour of whole ages lumbers down,
A hideous and misshapen length of ruins.
Sepulchral columns wrestle but in vain
With all-subduing Time; his cankering hand
With calm deliberate malice wasteth them:
Worn on the edge of days, the brass consumes,
The busto moulders, and the deep-cut marble,
Unsteady to the steel, gives up its charge.
Ambition, half-convicted of her folly,
Hangs down the head, and reddens at the tale.
Here all the mighty troublers of the earth,

Who swam to sovereign rule through seas of blood;
The oppressive, sturdy, man-destroying villains,
Who ravag'd kingdoms, and laid empires waste,
And in a cruel wantonness of power
Thinn'd states of half their people, and gave up
To want the rest; now like a storm that's spent,
Lie hush'd, and meanly sneak behind thy covert.
Vain thought! to hide them from the general scorn
That haunts and dogs them like an injured ghost
Implacable. Here too the petty tyrant,
Whose scant domains geographer ne'er notic'd,
And, well for neighb'ring grounds, of arm as short,
Who fix'd his iron talons on the poor,
And grip'd them like some lordly beast of prey,
Deaf to the forceful cries of gnawing hunger,
And piteous, plaintive voice of misery,
(As if a slave was not a shred of nature,
Of the same common nature with his lord;)
Now tame and humble, like a child that's whipp'd,
Shakes hand with dust, and calls the worm his kinsman;
Nor pleads his rank and birthright. Under ground
Precedency's a jest: vassal and lord,
Grossly familiar, side by side consume.

When self-esteem, or others' adulation,
Would cunningly persuade us we were something
Above the common level of our kind:
The grave gainsays the smooth-complexioned flattery,
And with blunt truth acquaints us what we are.

Beauty! thou pretty plaything! dear deceit!
That steals so softly o'er the stripling's heart,
And gives it a new pulse, unknown before!

The grave discredits thee: thy charms expung'd,
Thy roses faded, and thy lilies soil'd,
What hast thou more to boast of? Will thy lovers
Flock round thee now, to gaze and do thee homage?
Methinks I see thee with thy head low laid;
Whilst surfeited upon thy damask cheek,
The high-fed worm, in lazy volumes roll'd,
Riots unscar'd. For this was all thy caution?
For this thy painful labours at thy glass,
T' improve those charms, and keep them in repair,
For which the spoiler thanks thee not? Foul feeder!
Coarse fare and carrion please thee full as well,
And leave as keen a relish on the sense.
Look how the fair one weeps! the conscious tears
Stand thick as dew-drops on the bells of flowers:
Honest effusion! the swoln heart in vain
Works hard to put a gloss on its distress.
Strength too! thou surly and less gentle boast
Of those that laugh loud at the village ring!
A fit of common sickness pulls thee down,
With greater ease than e'er thou didst the stripling
That rashly dared thee to the unequal fight.
What groan was that I heard? deep groan indeed!
With anguish heavy laden! let me trace it:
From yonder bed it comes, where the strong man,
By stronger arm belabour'd, gasps for breath
Like a hard-hunted beast. How his great heart
Beats thick! his roomy chest by far too scant
To give his lungs full play! What now avail
The strong-built sinewy limbs, and well-spread shoulders?

See how he tugs for life, and lays about him,
Mad with the pain! eager he catches hold
Of what comes next to hand, and grasps it hard,
Just like a creature drowning! hideous sight!
Oh! how his eyes stand out, and stare full ghastly!
Whilst the distemper's rank and deadly venom
Shoots like a burning arrow 'cross his bowels,
And drinks his marrow up. Heard you that groan?
It was his last. See how the great Goliath,
Just like a child that brawl'd itself to rest,
Lies still. What mean'st thou then, O mighty boaster!
To vaunt of nerves of thine! What means the bull,
Unconscious of his strength, to play the coward,
And flee before a feeble thing like man;
That, knowing well the slackness of his arm,
Trusts only in the well-invented knife!
With study pale, and midnight vigils spent,
The star-surveying sage, close to his eye
Applies the sight-invigorating tube;
And travelling through the boundless length of space
Marks well the courses of the far-seen orbs,
That roll with regular confusion there,
In ecstasy of thought. But, ah! proud man!
Great heights are hazardous to the weak head:
Soon, very soon, thy firmest footing fails;
And down thou drop'st into that darksome place,
Where nor device nor knowledge ever came.
Here the tongue-warrior lies! disabled now,
Disarm'd, dishonour'd, like a wretch that's gagg'd,
And cannot tell his ail to passers-by.
Great man of language! whence this mighty change?

This dum despair, and drooping of the head?
Though strong persuasion hung upon thy lip,
And sly insinuation's softer arts
In ambush lay about thy flowing tongue;
Alas! how chop-fall'n now! thick mists and silence
Rest, like a weary cloud, upon thy breast
Unceasing. Ah! where's the lifted arm,
The strength of action, and the force of words,
The well-turned period, and the well-tun'd voice,
With all the lesser ornaments of phrase!
Ah! fled for ever as they ne'er had been!
Raz'd from the book of fame: or, more provoking,
Perhaps some hackney hunger-bitten scribbler
Insults thy memory, and blots thy tomb
With long flat narrative, or duller rhymes,
With heavy halting pace that drawl along:
Enough to rouse a dead man into rage,
And warm with red resentment the wan cheek.
Here the great masters of the healing art,
These mighty mock defrauders of the tomb!
Spite of their juleps and catholicons,
Resign to fate. Proud Æsculapius' son,
Where are thy boasted implements of art,
And all thy well-crammed magazines of health?
Nor hill, nor vale, as far as ship could go,
Nor margin of the gravel-bottom'd brook,
Escap'd thy rifling hand; from stubborn shrubs
Thou wrung'st their shy retiring virtues out,
And vex'd them in the fire: nor fly, nor insect,
Nor writhy snake, escap'd thy deep research.
But why this apparatus? why this cost?

Tell us, thou doughty keeper from the grave!
Where are thy recipes and cordials now,
With the long list of vouchers for thy cures?
Alas! thou speakest not. The bold impostor
Looks not more silly, when the cheat's found out.
Here the lank-sided miser, worst of felons!
Who meanly stole, discreditable shift!
From back and belly too, their proper cheer?
Eas'd of a tax it irk'd the wretch to pay
To his own carcass, now lies cheaply lodg'd,
By clam'rous appetites no longer teas'd,
Nor tedious bills of charges and repairs.
But ah! where are his rents, his comings in?
Aye! now you've made the rich man poor indeed:
Robb'd of his gods, what has he left behind?
O cursed lust of gold! when for thy sake
The fool throws up his int'rest in both worlds,
First starv'd in this, then damn'd in that to come.
How shocking must thy summons be, O Death!
To him that is at ease in his possessions;
Who, counting on long years of pleasure here,
Is quite unfurnish'd for that world to come!
In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement,
Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
But shrieks in vain! how wishfully she looks
On all she's leaving, now no longer hers!
A little longer, yet a little longer,
O might she stay to wash away her stains
And fit her for her passage! mournful sight!
Her very eyes weep blood; and every groan

She heaves is big with horror : but the foe,
Like a staunch murd'rer, steady to his purpose,
Pursues her close through every lane of life,
Nor misses once the track, but presses on;
Till forc'd at last to the tremendous verge,
At once she sinks to everlasting ruin.
Sure 'tis a serious thing to die ! my soul !
What a strange moment must it be, when near
Thy journey's end thou hast the gulf in view !
That awful gulf no mortal e'er repass'd
To tell what's doing on the other side !
Nature runs back and shudders at the sight,
And every life-string bleeds at thoughts of parting !
For part they must : body and soul must part;
Fond couple ! link'd more close than weded pair.
This wings its way to its Almighty Source,
The witness of its actions, now its judge ;
That drops into the dark and noisome grave,
Like a disabled pitcher, of no use.
If death were nothing, and nought after death;
If, when men died, at once they ceased to be,
Returning to the barren womb of nothing,
Whence first they sprung ; then might the debauchee
Untrembling mouth the heavens ; then might the drunkard
Reel over his full bowl, and when 'tis drain'd,
Fill up another to the brim, and laugh
At the poor bugbear Death ; then might the wretch
That's weary of the world, and tired of life,
At once give each inquietude the slip,
By stealing out of being when he pleas'd,

And by what way; whether by hemp or steel:
Death's thousand doors stand open. Who could force
The ill-pleas'd guest to sit out his full time,
Or blame him if he goes? Surely! he does well
That helps himself as timely as he can,
When able. But if there is an *hereafter*
And that there is, concience uninfluenced,
And suffer'd to speak out, tells every man,
Then must it be an awful thing to die;
More horrid yet to die by one's own hand.
Self-murder! name it not; our island's shame,
That makes her the reproach of neighb'ring states.
Shall Nature, swerving from her earliest dictate,
Self-preservation, fall by her own act!
Forbid it, heaven! let not upon disgust
The shameless hand be foully crimson'd o'er
With blood of its own lord. Dreadful attempt!
Just reeking from self-slaughter, in a rage
To rush into the presence of our Judge!
As if we challeng'd him to do his worst,
And matter'd not his wrath. Unheard-of tortures
Must be reserv'd for such: these herd together;
The common damn'd shun their society,
And look upon themselves as fiends less foul.

Our time is fix'd; and all our days are number'd;
How long, how short, we know not: this we know,
Duty requires we calmly wait the summons,
Nor dare to stir till heaven shall give permission;
Like sentries that must keep their destined stand,
And wait th' appointed hour, till they're reliev'd.
Those only are the brave who keep their ground,

And keep it to the last. To run away
Is but a coward's trick: to run away
From this world's ills, that at the very worst
Will soon blow o'er, thinking to mend ourselves
By boldly vent'ring on a world unknown,
And plunging headlong in the dark! 'tis mad:
No frenzy half so desperate as this.
Tell us, ye dead! will none of you in pity
To those you left behind, disclose the secret?
Oh! that some courteous ghost would blab it out,
What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be.
I've heard that souls departed have sometimes
Forewarned men of their death: 'twas kindly done
To knock and give the alarm. But what means
This stinted charity? 'Tis but lame kindness
That does its work by halves. Why might you not
Tell us what 'tis to die? Do the strict laws
Of your society forbid your speaking
Upon a point so nice? I'll ask no more:
Sullen, like lamps in sepulchres, your shine
Enlightens but yourselves: well- 'tis no matter:
A very little time will clear up all,
And make us learn'd as you are, and as close.
Death's shafts fly thick! Here falls the village swain,
And there his pamper'd lord! The cup goes round,
And who so artful as to put it by?
'Tis long since death had the majority:
Yet, strange! the living lay it not to heart.
See yonder maker of the dead man's bed,
The sexton, hoary-headed chronicle!
Of hard unmeaning face, down which ne'er stole

A gentle tear; with mattock in his hand,
Digs through whole rows of kindred and acquaintance,
By far his juniors! Scarce a scull's cast up
But well he knew its owner, and can tell
Some passage of his life. Thus, hand in hand,
The sot has walk'd with death twice twenty years;
And yet ne'er younker on the green laughs louder,
Or clubs a smuttier tale: when drunkards meet
None sings a merrier catch, or lends a hand
More willing to his cup. Poor wretch! he minds not
That soon some trusty brother of the trade
Shall do for him what he has done for thousands.
On this side, and on that, men see their friends
Drop off, like leaves in autumn; yet launch out
Into fantastic schemes, which the long livers
In the world's hale and undegenerate days
Could scarce have leisure for; fools that we are!
Never to think of death and of ourselves
At the same time; as if to learn to die
Were no concern of ours. O more than sottish!
For creatures of a day, in gamesome mood,
To frolick on eternity's dread brink,
Unapprehensive; when for aught we know
The very first swoln surge shall sweep us in.
Think we, or think we not, time hurries on
With a resistless, unremitting stream,
Yet treads more soft, than e'er did midnight thief,
That slides his hand under the miser's pillow,
And carries off his prize. What is this world?
What but a spacious burial-field unwall'd,
Strew'd with death's spoils, the spoils of animals,

Savage and tame, and full of dead men's bones?
The very turf on which we tread once liv'd;
And we that live must lend our carcasses
To cover our own offspring: in their turns
They too must cover theirs. 'Tis here all meet!
The shivering Icelander, and sun-burnt Moor;
Men of all climes, that never met before;
And of all creeds, the Jew, the Turk, the Christian.
Here the proud prince, and favourite yet prouder,
His sovereign's keeper, and the people's scourge,
Are huddled out of sight. Here lie abash'd
The great negociators of the earth,
And celebrated masters of the balance,
Deep read in stratagems, and wiles of courts:
Now vain their treaty-skill! Death scorns to treat.
Here the o'erloaded slave flings down his burden
From his galled shoulders; and when the cruel tyrant
With all his guards and tools of power about him,
Is meditating new unheard-of hardships,
Mocks his short arm, and quick as thought escapes
Where tyrants vex not, and the weary rest.
Here the warm lover, leaving the cool shade,
The tell-tale echo, and the bubbling stream,
Time out of mind the fav'rite seats of love,
Fast by his gentle mistress lays him down
Unblasted by foul tongue. Here friends and foes
Lie close, unmindful of their former feuds.
The lawn-rob'd prelate, and plain presbyter,
Ere while that stood aloof as shy to meet,
Familiar mingle here, like sister-streams
That some rude interposing rock had split.

Here is the large-limb'd peasant; here the child
Of a span long, that never saw the sun,
Nor press'd the nipple, strangled in life's porch:
Here is the mother with her sons and daughters;
The barren wife; the long-demurring maid,
Whose lonely unappropriated sweets
Smil'd like yon knot of cowslips on the cliff,
Not to be come at by the willing hand.
Here are the prude severe, and gay coquette,
The sober widow, and the young green virgin,
Cropp'd like a rose before 'tis fully blown,
Or half its worth disclos'd. Strange medley here!
Here garrulous old age winds up his tale;
And jovial youth, of lightsome vacant heart,
Whose every day was made of melody,
Hears not the voice of mirth: the shrill-tongu'd shrew,
Meek as the turtle-dove, forgets her chiding.
Here are the wise, the generous, and the brave;
The just, the good, the worthless, the profane,
The downright clown, and perfectly well-bred;
The fool, the churl, the scoundrel, and the mean,
The supple statesman, and the patriot stern:
The wreck of nations and the spoils of time,
With all the lumber of six thousand years.

Poor Man! how happy once in thy first state,
When yet but warm from thy great Maker's hand,
He stamp'd thee with his image, and well-pleas'd
Smil'd on his last fair work! Then all was well.
Sound was the body, and the soul serene;
Like two sweet instruments, ne'er out of tune,
That play their several parts. Nor head, nor heart

Offer'd to ache ; nor was there cause they should,
For all was pure within : no fell remorse,
Nor anxious castings up of what may be,
Alarm'd his peaceful bosom : summer seas
Show not more smooth when kiss'd by southern winds,
Just ready to expire. Scarce importun'd,
The generous soil with a luxuriant hand
Offer'd the various produce of the year,
And every thing most perfect in its kind.
Blessed, thrice blessed days ! but, ah ! how short !
Bless'd as the pleasing dreams of holy men,
But fugitive, like those, and quickly gone.
O slippery state of things ! what sudden turns,
What strange vicissitudes, in the first leaf
Of man's sad history ! to-day most happy ;
And, ere to-morrow's sun has set, most abject !
How scant the space between these vast extremes !
Thus far'd it with our Sire : not long he enjoy'd
His paradise ! scarce had the happy tenant
Of the fair spot due time to prove its sweets,
Or sum them up, when straight he must be gone,
Ne'er to return again. And must he go ?
Can nought compound for the first dire offence
Of erring man ? Like one that is condemn'd,
Fain would he trifle time with idle talk,
And parley with his fate. But 'tis in vain.
Not all the lavish odours of the place,
Offer'd in incense, can procure his pardon,
Or mitigate his doom. A mighty angel
With flaming sword forbids his longer stay,
And drives the loiterer forth ; nor must he take

One last and farewell round. At once he lost
His glory and his God. If mortal now,
And sorely maim'd, no wonder! Man has sinn'd.
Sick of his bliss, and bent on new adventures,
Evil he would needs try: nor tried in vain.
(Dreadful experiment! destructive measure!
Where the worst thing could happen, is success.)
Alas! too well he sped: the good he scorn'd
Stalk'd off reluctant, like an ill-us'd ghost,
Not to return; or, if it did, its visits
Like those of angels short, and far between:
Whilst the black dæmon, with his hell-'scaped train,
Admitted once into its better room,
Grew loud and mutinous, nor would be gone;
Lording it o'er the man, who now too late
Saw the rash error which he could not mend;
An error fatal not to him alone,
But to his future sons, his fortune's heirs.
Inglorious bondage! human nature groans
Beneath a vassalage so vile and cruel,
And its vast body bleeds through every vein.
What havoc hast thou made, foul monster, Sin!
Greatest and first of ills! the fruitful parent
Of woes of all dimensions! but for thee
Sorrow had never been. All noxious things
Of vilest nature, other sorts of evils,
Are kindly circumscrib'd, and have their bounds.
The fierce volcano, from its burning entrails
That belches molten stone and globes of fire,
Involv'd in pitchy clouds of smoke and stench,
Mars the adjacent fields for some leagues round.

And there it stops. The big-swoln inundation,
Of mischief more diffusive, raving loud,
Buries whole tracts of country, threat'ning more;
But that too has its shore it cannot pass.
More dreadful far than these, sin has laid waste,
Not here and there a country, but a world;
Despatching at a wide extended blow
Entire mankind, and for their sakes defacing
A whole creation's beauty with rude hands;
Blasting the foodful grain, the loaded branches,
And marking all along its way with ruin.
Accursed thing! O where shall fancy find
A proper name to call thee by, expressive
Of all thy horrors? pregnant womb of ills!
Of temper so transcendently malign,
That toads and serpents of most deadly kind
Compar'd to thee are harmless. Sicknesses
Of every size and symptom, racking pains,
And bluest plagues are thine! See how the fiend
Profusely scatters the contagion round;
Whilst deep-mouth'd slaughter, bellowing at her heels,
Wades deep in blood new spilt; yet for to-morrow
Shapes out new work of great uncommon daring,
And inly pines till the dread blow is struck.
But hold! I've gone too far; too much discover'd
My father's nakedness, and nature's shame.
Here let me pause! and drop an honest tear,
One burst of filial duty, and condolence,
O'er all those ample deserts Death hath spread,
This chaos of mankind. O great man-eater!
Whose every day is carnival, not sated yet!

Unheard-of epicure! without a fellow!
The veriest gluttons do not always cram;
Some intervals of abstinence are sought
To edge the appetite: thou seekest none.
Methinks the countless swarms thou hast devour'd,
And thousands that each hour thou gobblest up,
This, less than this, might gorge thee to the full.
But, ah! rapacious still, thou gap'st for more;
Like one, whole days defrauded of his meals,
On whom lank hunger lays his skinny hand,
And whets to keenest eagerness his cravings,
(As if Diseases, Massacre, and Poison,
Famine, and War, were not thy caterers!)
But know that thou must render up thy dead,
And with high interest too! they are not thine;
But only in thy keeping for a season,
Till the great promis'd day of restitution;
When loud diffusive sound from brazen trump
Of strong-lung'd cherub shall alarm thy captives,
And rouse the long, long sleepers into life,
Day-light, and liberty.——
Then must thy gates fly open, and reveal
The mines that lay long forming under ground,
In their dark cells immur'd; but now full ripe,
And pure as silver from the crucible,
That twice has stood the torture of the fire,
And inquisition of the forge. We know
The illustrious Deliverer of mankind,
The Son of God, thee foil'd. Him in thy power
Thou couldst not hold: self-vigorous he rose,
And, shaking off thy fetters, soon retook

Those spoils his voluntary yielding lent,
(Sure pledge of our releasement from thy thrall !)
Twice twenty days he sojourn'd here on earth,
And show'd himself alive to chosen witnesses
By proofs so strong, that the most slow-assenting
Had not a scruple left. This having done,
He mounted up to heaven. Methinks I see him
Climb the aerial heights and glide along
Athwart the severing clouds : but the faint eye,
Flung backward in the chase, soon drops its hold,
Disabled quite, and jaded with pursuing.
Heaven's portals wide expand to let him in ;
Nor are his friends shut out : as some great prince
Not for himself alone procures admission,
But for his train ; it was his royal will,
That where he is, there should his followers be.
Death only lies between ! a gloomy path !
Made yet more gloomy by our coward fear !
But nor untrod, nor tedious ; the fatigue
Will soon go off. Besides, there's no by-road
To bliss. Then why, like ill-conditioned children,
Start we at transient hardships in the way
That leads to purer air and softer skies,
And a ne'er setting sun ? Fools that we are !
We wish to be where sweets unwithering bloom ;
But straight our wish revoke, and will not go.
So have I seen, upon a summer's even,
Fast by the riv'let's brink, a youngster play :
How wishfully he looks to stem the tide !
This moment resolute, next unresolv'd,
At last he dips his foot ; but as he dips
His fears redouble, and he runs a[illegible]

From th' inoffensive stream, unmindful now
Of all the flowers that paint the further bank,
And smil'd so sweet of late. Thrice welcome Death
That after many a painful bleeding step,
Conducts us to our home, and lands us safe
On the long wish'd-for shore. Prodigious change!
Our bane turn'd to a blessing! Death disarm'd
Loses his fellness quite; all thanks to Him
Who scourg'd the venom out! Sure the last end
Of the good man is peace. How calm his exit!
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.
Behold him! in the evening tide of life,
A life well spent, whose early care it was
His riper years should not upbraid his green
By unperceiv'd degrees he wears away;
Yet like the sun seems larger at his setting!
High in his faith and hopes, look! how he reaches
After the prize in view! and, like a bird
That's hamper'd, struggles hard to get away!
Whilst the glad gates of sight are wide expanded
To let new glories in, the first fair fruits
Of the fast-coming harvest! Then! O then!
Each earth-born joy grows vile, or disappears,
Shrunk to a thing of nought. O how he longs
To have his passport sign'd, and be dismiss'd!
'Tis done, and now he's happy! The glad soul
Has not a wish uncrown'd. Even the lag flesh
Rests too in hope of meeting once again
Its better half, never to sunder more.
Nor shall it hope in vain: the time draws on
When not a single spot of burial-earth,

Whether on land, or in the spacious sea,
But must give back its long-committed dust
Inviolate: and faithfully shall these
Make up the full account; not the least atom
Embezzled, or mislaid, of the whole tale.
Each soul shall have a body ready-furnish'd;
And each shall have his own. Hence, ye profane:
Ask not how this can be. Sure the same power
That rear'd the piece at first, and took it down,
Can re-assemble the loose scatter'd parts,
And put them as they were: Almighty God
Has done much more: nor is his arm impair'd
Through length of days; and what he can he will
His faithfulness stands bound to see it done.
When the dread trumpet sounds, the slumbering dust,
Not unattentive to the call, shall wake;
And every joint possess its proper place,
With a new elegance of form, unknown
To its first state. Nor shall the conscious soul
Mistake its partner; but amidst the crowd,
Singling its other half, into its arms
Shall rush, with all the impatience of a man
That's new come home, who having long been absent,
With haste runs over every different room,
In pain to see the whole. Thrice happy meeting!
Nor time, nor death, shall ever part them more.
'Tis but a night, a long and moonless night;
We make the grave our bed, and then are gone.
Thus, at the shut of even, the weary bird
Leaves the wide air, and in some lonely brake
Cowers down, and dozes till the dawn of day;
Then claps his well-fledg'd wings and bears away.

ON THE

DEATH OF LADY COVENTRY.

Written in 1760.

THE midnight clock has toll'd—and, hark! the bell
Of death beats slow: heard ye the note profound?
It pauses now; and now, with rising knell,
Flings to the hollow gale its sullen sound.

Yes—Coventry is dead. Attend the strain,
Daughters of Albion! ye that, light as air,
So oft have tripp'd in her fantastic train,
With hearts as gay, and faces half as fair:

For she was fair beyond your brightest bloom;
(This envy owns, since now her bloom is fled;)
Fair as the forms that, wove in Fancy's loom,
Float in light vision round the poet's head.

Whene'er with soft serenity she smil'd,
Or caught the orient blush of quick surprise,
How sweetly mutable, how brightly wild,
The liquid lustre darted from her eyes!

Each look, each motion, wak'd a new-born grace,
That o'er her form its transient glory cast;
Some lovelier wonder soon usurp'd the place,
Chas'd by a charm still lovelier than the last.

That bell again! It tells us what she is;
On what she was, no more the strain prolong;
Luxuriant fancy, pause! an hour like this
Demands the tribute of a serious song.

Maria claims it from that sable bier,
Where cold and wan the slumberer rests her head;
In still small whispers to reflection's ear
She breathes the solemn dictates of the dead.

O catch the awful notes, and lift them loud!
Proclaim the theme, by sage, by fool, rever'd;
Hear it, ye young, ye vain, ye great, ye proud!
'Tis Nature speaks, and Nature will be heard.

Yes; ye shall hear, and tremble as ye hear,
While high with health, your hearts exulting leap,
E'en in the midst of pleasure's mad career,
The mental monitor shall wake and weep!

For say, than Coventry's propitious star,
What brighter planet on your births arose?
Or gave of fortune's gifts an ampler share,
In life to lavish, or by death to lose?

Early to lose! While borne on busy wing,
Ye sip the nectar of each varying bloom;

Nor fear, while basking in the meads of spring,
The wintry storm that sweeps you to the tomb.

Think of her fate! revere the heavenly hand
That led her hence, though soon, by steps so slow;
Long at her couch Death took his patient stand,
And menac'd oft, and oft withheld the blow:

To give reflection time, with lenient art
Each fond delusion from her soul to steal;
Teach her from folly peaceably to part,
And wean her from a world she lov'd so well.

Say, are ye sure his mercy shall extend
To you so long a span? Alas, ye sigh!
Make then, while yet ye may, your God your friend,
And learn with equal ease to sleep or die!

Nor think the Muse, whose sober voice you hear,
Contracts with bigot frown her sullen brow;
Casts round religion's orb the mists of fear,
Or shades with horrors what with smiles should glow

No—she would warm you with seraphic fire,
Heirs as ye are of heaven's eternal day;
Would bid you boldly to that heaven aspire,
Nor sink and slumber in your cells of clay,

Know, ye were form'd to range yon azure field,
In yon etherial founts of bliss to lave:
Force then, secure in faith's protecting shield,
The sting from death, the victory from the grave!

Is this the bigot's rant? Away, ye vain,
Your hopes, your fears, in doubt, in dulness steep;
Go sooth your souls, in sickness, grief, or pain,
With the sad solace of eternal sleep!

Yet will I praise you, triflers as ye are,
More than those preachers of your fav'rite creed,
Who proudly swell the brazen throat of war,
Who form the phalanx, bid the battle bleed,

Nor wish for more; who conquer but to die.
Hear, Folly, hear, and triumph in the tale!
Like you they reason, not like you enjoy
The breeze of bliss that fills your silken sail!

On pleasure's glittering stream ye gayly steer
Your little course to cold oblivion's shore;
They dare the storm, and through th' inclement year
Stem the rough surge, and brave the torrent's roar.

Is it for glory? That just fate denies;
Long must the warrior moulder in his shroud,
Ere from her trump the heaven-breath'd accents rise,
That lift the hero from the fighting crowd!

Is it his grasp of empire to extend?
To curb the fury of insulting foes?
Ambition, cease! the idle contest end:
'Tis but a kingdom thou canst win or lose.

And why must murder'd myriads lose their all,
(If life be all,) why desolation lower

With famish'd frown on this affrighted ball,
That thou may'st flame the meteor of an hour?

Go, wiser ye, that flutter life away,
Crown with the mantling juice the goblet high!
Weave the light dance with festive freedom gay,
And live your moment, since the next ye die!

Yet know, vain skeptics! know, the Almighty Mind,
Who breath'd on man a portion of his fire,
Made his free soul, by earth nor time confin'd,
To heaven, to immortality aspire.

Nor shall the pile of hope his mercy rear'd,
By vain philosophy be e'er destroy'd:
Eternity, by all or wish'd or fear'd,
Shall be by all or suffer'd or enjoy'd!

NOTE. In a book of French verses, entitled *Œuvres du Philosophe de Sans Souci*, and lately reprinted at Berlin by authority, under the title of *Poesies Diverses*, may be found an Epistle to Marshal Keith, written professedly against the immortality of the soul. By way of specimen of the whole, take the following lines:

De l'avenir, cher Keith, jugeons par le passe;
Comme avant que je fusse il n'avoit point pense;
De meme, apres ma mort, quand toutes mes parties
Par la corruption seront aneanties,
Par un meme dest in il ne pensera plus!
Non, rien n'est plus certain, soyons en convaincu.

It is to this Epistle that the latter part of the Elegy alludes.

Hymn,

FROM PSALM 148.

BEGIN, my soul, the exalted lay!
Let each enraptured thought obey,
And praise the Almighty's name.
Lo! heaven and earth, and seas, and skies,
In one melodious concert rise,
To swell the inspiring theme.

Ye fields of light, celestial plains,
Where gay transporting beauty reigns,
Ye scenes divinely fair!
Your Maker's wondrous power proclaim!
Tell how he form'd your shining frame,
And breath'd the fluid air.

Ye angels, catch the thrilling sound!
While all the adoring thrones around
His boundless mercy sing:
Let every listening saint above
Wake all the tuneful soul of love,
And touch the sweetest string.

Join, ye loud spheres, the vocal choir;
Thou, dazzling orb of liquid fire,
The mighty chorus aid:
Soon as gray evening gilds the plain,
Thou, moon, protract the melting strain,
And praise him in the shade.

Thou heaven of heavens, his vast abode,
Ye clouds, proclaim your forming God,
Who call'd yon worlds from night:
"Ye shades, dispel!"—th' Eternal said;
At once th' involving darkness fled,
And nature sprung to light.

Whate'er a blooming world contains,
That wings the air, that skims the plains,
United praise bestow:
Ye dragons, sound his awful name
To heaven aloud; and roar acclaim,
Ye swelling deeps below.

Let every element rejoice:
Ye thunders, burst with awful voice
To him who bids you roll;
His praise in softer notes declare,
Each whispering breeze of yielding air,
And breathe it to the soul.

To him, ye graceful cedars, bow;
Ye towering mountains, bending low,
Your great Creator own;

Tell, when affrighted nature shook,
How Sinai kindled at his look,
And trembled at his frown.

Ye flocks, that haunt the humble vale,
Ye insects, fluttering on the gale,
In mutual concourse rise:
Crop the gay rose's vermeil bloom,
And waft its spoils, a sweet perfume,
In incense to the skies.

Wake, all ye mountain tribes, and sing;
Ye blooming warblers of the spring,
Harmonious anthems raise
To him who shap'd your finer mould,
Who tipt your glittering wings with gold,
And tun'd your voice to praise.

Let man, by nobler passions sway'd,
The feeling heart, the judging head,
In heavenly praise employ;
Spread his tremendous name around,
Till heaven's broad arch rings back the sound,
The general burst of joy.

Ye, whom the charms of grandeur please,
Nurs'd on the downy lap of ease,
Fall prostrate at his throne;
Ye princes, rulers, all adore;
Praise him ye kings, who makes your power
An image of his own.

Ye fair, by nature form'd to move,
O praise the eternal Source of Love
With youth's enlivening fire:
Let age take up the tuneful lay,
Sigh his blest name—then soar away
And ask an angel's lyre.

ODE TO LEVEN WATER.

On Leven's banks, while free to rove
And tune the rural pipe to love,
I envied not the happiest swain
That ever trod the Arcadian plain.
Pure stream! in whose transparent wave
My youthful limbs I wont to lave;
No torrents stain thy limpid source;
No rocks impede thy dimpling course,
That sweetly warbles o'er its bed,
With white, round, polish'd pebbles spread;
While, lightly pois'd, the scaly brood,
In myriads cleave thy crystal flood;
The springing trout, in speckled pride;
The salmon, monarch of the tide;
The ruthless pike, intent on war;
The silver eel, and mottled par.
Devolving from thy parent lake,
A charming maze thy waters make,
By bowers of birch and groves of pine
And hedges flower'd with eglantine
Still on thy banks so gayly green,
May num'rous herds and flocks be seen:
And lasses, chanting o'er the pail;
And shepherds, piping in the dale;
And ancient faith, that knows no guile;
And industry, embrown'd with toil;
And hearts resolv'd, and hands prepar'd,
The blessings they enjoy to guard.

THE FIRE-SIDE.

Dear Chloe, while the busy crowd,
The vain, the wealthy, and the proud,
In Folly's maze advance;
Though singularity and pride
Be call'd our choice, we'll step aside,
Nor join the giddy dance.

From the gay world we'll oft retire,
To our own family and fire,
Where love our hours employs;
No noisy neighbour enters here,
No intermeddling stranger near,
To spoil our heart-felt joys.

If solid happiness we prize,
Within our breast this jewel lies;
And they are fools who roam:
The world has nothing to bestow;
From our own selves our joys must flow
And that dear hut our home.

Of rest was Noah's dove bereft,
When with impatient wing she left
That safe retreat, the ark;

Giving her vain excursion o'er,
The disappointed bird once more
Explor'd the sacred bark.

Though fools spurn Hymen's gentle powers,
We, who improve his golden hours,
By sweet experience know,
That marriage, rightly understood,
Gives to the tender and the good
A paradise below.

Our babes shall richest comforts bring;
If tutor'd right, they'll prove a spring
Whence pleasures ever rise:
We'll form their minds, with studious care,
To all that's manly, good, and fair,
And train them for the skies.

While they our wisest hours engage,
They'll joy our youth, support our age,
And crown our hoary hairs:
They'll grow in virtue every day,
And thus our fondest loves repay,
And recompense our cares.

No borrow'd joys, they're all our own,
While to the world we live unknown,
Or by the world forgot:
Monarchs! we envy not your state;
We look with pity on the great,
And bless our humble lot.

Our portion is not large, indeed;
But then how little do we need!
For nature's calls are few:
In this the art of living lies,
To want no more than may suffice,
And make that little do.

We'll therefore relish, with content,
Whate'er kind Providence has sent,
Nor aim beyond our power;
For if our stock be very small,
'Tis prudence to enjoy it all,
Nor lose the present hour.

To be resign'd when ills betide,
Patient when favours are denied,
And pleased with favours given;
Dear Chloe, this is wisdom's part;
This is that incense of the heart
Whose fragrance smells to heaven.

We'll ask no long protracted treat,
Since winter-life is seldom sweet;
But when our feast is o'er,
Grateful from table we'll arise,
Nor grudge our sons, with envious eyes,
The relics of our store.

Thus, hand in hand, through life we'll go;
Its chequer'd paths of joy and wo
With cautious steps we'll tread;

Quit its vain scenes without a tear,
Without a trouble or a fear,
And mingle with the dead.

While Conscience, like a faithful friend,
Shall through the gloomy vale attend,
And cheer our dying breath ;
Shall, when all other comforts cease,
Like a kind angel whisper peace,
And smooth the bed of death.

Death.

BY DR. PORTEUS, BISHOP OF LONDON.

Friend to the wretch whom every friend forsakes,
I woo thee, death!—In fancy's fairy paths
Let the gay songster rove, and gently trill
The strain of empty joy. Life and its joys
I leave to those that prize them. At this hour,
This solemn hour, when silence rules the world,
And wearied nature makes a general pause;
Wrapt in night's sable robe, through cloisters drear
And charnels pale, tenanted by a throng
Of meagre phantoms shooting 'cross my path
With silent glance, I seek the shadowy vale
Of Death. Deep in a murky cave's recess,
Lav'd by Oblivion's listless stream, and fenc'd
By shelving rocks, and intermingled horrors
Of yew and cyprus shade, from all intrusion
Of busy noontide beam, the Monarch sits
In unsubstantial majesty enthron'd.
At his right hand, nearest himself in place
And fruitfulness of form his parent Sin,
With fatal industry and cruel care
Busies himself in pointing all his stings,
And tipping every shaft with venom drawn
From her infernal store: around him rang'd

In terrible array, and mixture strange
Of uncouth shapes, stands his dread ministers.
Foremost Old age, his natural ally
And firmest friend; next him Diseases thick,
A motley train; Fever with cheek of fire;
Consumption wan: Palsy, half-warm with life,
And half a clay-cold lump; joint-tort'ring Gout;
And ever-gnawing Rheum! Convulsion wild;
Swollen Dropsy; panting Asthma; Apoplex
Full-gorg'd. There too the Pestilence that walks
In darkness, and the Sickness that destroys
At broad noon-day. These, and a thousand more,
Horrid to tell, attentive wait; and, when
By Heaven's command Death waves his ebon wand,
Sudden rush forth to execute his purpose,
And scatter desolation o'er the earth.
  Ill-fated Man! for whom such various forms
Of misery wait, and mark their future prey!
Ah! why, all-righteous Father, didst thou make
This creature, Man? Why wake the unconscious dust
To life and wretchedness! O better far
Still had he slept in uncreated night,
If this the lot of being! Was it for this
Thy breath divine kindled within his breast
The vital flame? For this was thy fair image
Stamp'd on his soul in godlike lineaments?
For this dominion given him absolute
O'er all thy works, only that he might reign
Supreme in wo? From the blest source of Good
Could Pain and Death proceed? Could such foul ills
Fall from fair Mercy's hands? Far be the thought,

The impious thought! God never made a creature
But what was good. He made *a living Soul;*
The wretched Mortal was the work of Man.
Forth from his Maker's hands he sprung to life,
Fresh with immortal bloom; no pain he knew,
No fear of change, no check to his desires,
Save one command. That one command, which stood
'Twixt him and death, the test of his obedience,
Urg'd on by wanton curiosity,
He broke. There in one moment was undone
The fairest of God's works. The same rash hand
That pluck'd in evil hour the fatal fruit,
Unbarr'd the gates of Hell, and let loose Sin
And Death, and all the family of Pain,
To prey upon Mankind. Young Nature saw
The monstrous crew, and shook thro' all her frame.
Then fled her new-born lustre, then began
Heaven's cheerful face to lower, then vapours chok'd
The troubled air, and form'd a veil of clouds
To hide the willing Sun. The earth convuls'd
With painful throes threw forth a bristly crop
Of thorns and briers; and insect, bird, and beast,
That wont before with admiration fond
To gaze at man and fearless crowd around him,
Now fled before his face, shunning in haste
The infection of his misery. He alone
Who justly might, the offended Lord of Man,
Turn'd not away his face; he, full of pity,
Forsook not in this uttermost distress
His best lov'd work. That comfort still remain'd,
(That best, that greatest comfort in affliction,)

The countenance of God, and through the gloom
Shot forth some kindly gleams, to cheer and warm
The offender's sinking soul. Hope, sent from Heaven,
Uprais'd his drooping head, and show'd afar
A happier scene of things ; the Promised Seed
Trampling upon the Serpent's humbled crest ;
Death of his sting disarm'd ; and the dark grave,
Made pervious to the realms of endless day,
No more the limit but the gate of life.

Cheer'd with the view, Man went to till the ground,
From whence he rose ; sentenc'd indeed to toil
As to a punishment, yet (ev'n in wrath
So merciful is Heav'n) this toil became
The solace of his woes, the sweet employ
Of many a live-long hour, and surest guard
Against Disease and Death. Death tho' denounc'd,
Was yet a distant ill, by feeble arm
Of Age, his sole support, led slowly on.
Not then, as since, the short-liv'd sons of men
Flock'd to his realms in countless multitudes ;
Scarce in the course of twice five hundred years
One solitary ghost went shivering down
To his unpeopled shore. In sober state
Through the sequestered vale of rural life,
The venerable Patriarch guileless held
The tenour of his way ; Labour prepar'd
His simple fare, and Temperance rul'd his board.
Tir'd with his daily toil, at early eve
He sunk to sudden rest ; gentle and pure
As breath of evening Zephyr, and as sweet
Were all his slumbers ; with the Sun he rose,

Alert and vigorous as He, to run
His destin'd course. Thus nerv'd with giant strength,
He stemm'd the tide of time, and stood the shock
Of ages rolling harmless o'er his head.
At life's meridian point arriv'd, he stood,
And looking round, saw all the valleys fill'd
With nations from his loins; full well content
To leave his race thus scatter'd o'er the earth,
Along the gentle slope of life's decline
He bent his gradual way, till full of years
He dropt like mellow fruit into his grave.
Such in the infancy of Time was Man;
So calm was life, so impotent was Death!
O had he but preserved these few remains,
The shattered fragments of lost happiness,
Snatch'd by the hand of Heav'n from the sad wreck
Of innocence primeval; still had he liv'd
In ruin great; though fallen, yet not forlorn;
Though mortal, yet not every where beset
With Death in every shape! But he, impatient
To be completely wretched, hastens to fill up
The measure of his woes:—'Twas Man himself
Brought Death into the world; and Man himself
Gave keenness to his darts, quicken'd his pace,
And multiplied destruction on mankind.
First Envy, eldest-born of Hell, embru'd
Her hands in blood, and taught the Sons of Men
To make a Death which Nature never made,
And God abhorr'd; with violence rude to break
The thread of life ere half its length was run,
And rob a wretched brother of his being.

With joy Ambition saw, and soon improv'd
The execrable deed. 'Twas not enough
By subtle fraud to snatch a single life;
Puny impiety! whole kingdoms fell
To sate the lust of power: more horrid still,
The foulest stain and scandal of our nature,
Became its boast. *One* murder made a villain;
Millions a hero. Princes were privileg'd
To kill, and numbers sanctified the crime.
Ah! why will Kings forget that they are Men?
And Men that they are brethren? Why delight
In human sacrifice? Why burst the ties
Of Nature, that should knit their souls together
In one soft bond of amity and love?
Yet still they breathe destruction, still go on
Inhumanly ingenious to find out
New pains for life, new terrors for the grave,
Artificers of Death! Still Monarchs dream
Of universal empire growing up
From universal ruin. Blast the design,
Great God of Hosts, nor let thy creatures fall
Unpitied victims at Ambition's shrine!
  Yet say, should Tyrants learn at last to feel,
And the loud din of battle cease to bray;
Should dove-eyed Peace o'er all the earth extend
Her olive-branch, and give the world repose,
Would Death be foil'd? Would health, and strength, and
youth
Defy his power? Has he no arts in store,
No other shafts save those of war? Alas!
Ev'n in the smile of Peace, that smile which sheds

A heavenly sunshine o'er the soul, there basks
That serpent Luxury. War its thousand slays;
Peace its ten thousands. In the embattled plain,
Though Death exults, and claps his raven wings,
Yet reigns he not ev'n there so absolute,
So merciless, as in yon frantic scenes
Of midnight revel and tumultuous mirth,
Where in the intoxicating draught conceal'd,
Or couch'd beneath the glance of lawless love,
He snares the simple youth, who, nought suspecting,
Means to be blest—but finds himself undone.
Down the smooth stream of life the stripling darts,
Gay as the morn; bright glows the vernal sky.
Hope swells his sails, and Passion steers his course,
Safe glides his little bark along the shore
Where Virtue takes her stand; but if too far
He launches forth beyond Discretion's mark,
Sudden the tempest scowls, the surges roar,
Blot his fair day, and plunge him in the deep.
O sad but sure mischance! O happier far
To lie like gallant Howe 'midst Indian wilds
A breathless corse, cut off by savage hands
In earliest prime, a generous sacrifice
To freedom's holy cause, than so to fall,
Torn immature from life's meridian joys,
A prey to Vice, Intemperance, and Disease.
Yet die ev'n thus, thus rather perish still,
Ye sons of Pleasure by the Almighty stricken,
Than ever dare (though oft, alas! ye dare)
To lift against yourselves the murderous steel,
To wrest from God's own hand the sword of Justice

And be your own avengers? Hold, rash Man,
Though with anticipating speed thou'st rang'd
Through every region of delight, nor left
One joy to gild the evening of thy days:
Though life seem one uncomfortable void,
Guilt at thy heels, before thy face Despair;
Yet gay this scene, and light this load of wo,
Compar'd with thy hereafter. Think, O think:
And ere thou plunge into the vast abyss,
Pause on the verge awhile: look down and see
Thy future mansion. Why that start of horror?
From thy slack hand why drops the uplifted steel?
Didst thou not think such vengeance must await
The wretch, that with his crimes all fresh about him
Rushes irreverent, unprepar'd, uncall'd,
Into his Maker's presence, throwing back
With insolent disdain his choicest gift?

Live then, while heav'n in pity lends thee life,
And think it all too short to wash away,
By penitential tears and deep contrition,
The scarlet of thy crimes. So shalt thou find
Rest to thy soul; so unappall'd shalt meet
Death when he comes, not wantonly invite
His lingering stroke. Be it thy sole concern
With innocence to live: with patience wait
The appointed hour; too soon that hour will come,
Though Nature run her course. But Nature's God,
If need require, by thousand various ways,
Without thy aid can shorten that short span,
And quench the lamp of life. O when he comes,
Rous'd by the cry of wickedness extreme,

To Heaven ascending from some guilty land,
Now ripe for vengeance ; when he comes array'd
In all the terrors of Almighty wrath,
Forth from his bosom plucks his lingering arm,
And on the miscreants pours destruction down ;
Who can abide his coming ? Who can bear
His whole displeasure ? In no common form
Death then appears, but starting into size
Enormous, measures with gigantic stride
The astonish'd Earth, and from his looks throws round
Unutterable horror and dismay ;
All Nature lends her aid. Each element
Arms in his cause. Ope fly the doors of Heav'n ;
The fountains of the deep their barriers break ;
Above, below, the rival torrents pour,
And drown Creation ; or, in floods of fire
Descends a livid cataract, and consumes
An impious race. Sometimes, when all seems peace,
Wakes the grim whirlwind, and with rude embrace
Sweeps nations to their grave, or in the deep
Whelms the proud wooden world ; full many a youth
Floats on the watery bier, or lies unwept
On some sad desert shore ! At dead of night,
In sullen silence stalks forth Pestilence ;
Contagion close behind taints all her steps
With poisonous dew ; no smiting hand is seen,
No sound is heard ; but soon her secret path
Is mark'd with desolation ; heaps on heaps
Promiscuous drop. No friend, no refuge near ;
All, all is false and treacherous around ;
All that they touch, or taste, or breathe, is Death

But ah! what means that ruinous roar? why fail
These tottering feet! Earth to its centre feels
The Godhead's power, and trembling at his touch
Through all its pillars, and in every pore,
Hurls to the ground, with one convulsive heave,
Precipitating domes, and towns, and towers,
The work of ages. Crush'd beneath the weight
Of general devastation, millions find
One common grave; not even a widow left
To wail her sons: the house, that should protect,
Entombs its master; and the faithless plain,
If there he flies for help, with sudden yawn
Starts from beneath him. Shield me, gracious Heaven,
O snatch me from destruction? If this Globe,
This solid Globe, which thine own hand hath made
So firm and sure, if this my steps betray;
If my own mother Earth, from whence I sprung,
Rise up with rage unnatural to devour
Her wretched offspring, whither shall I fly?
Where look for succour? Where but up to thee,
Almighty Father? Save, O save thy suppliant
From horrors such as these? At thy good time
Let death approach; I reck not—let him but come
In genuine form, not with thy vengeance arm'd,
Too much for man to bear. O rather lend
Thy kindly aid to mitigate his stroke;
And at that hour when all aghast I stand
(A trembling candidate for thy compassion)
On this world's brink, and look into the next;
When my soul, starting from the dark unknown,
Casts back a wishful look, and fondly clings

To her frail prop, unwilling to be wrench'd
From this fair scene, from all her 'custom'd joys,
And all the lovely relatives of life,
Then shed thy comforts o'er me, then put on
The gentlest of thy looks. Let no dark crimes,
In all their hideous forms then starting up,
Plant themselves round my couch in grim array,
And stab my bleeding heart with two-edged torture
Sense of past guilt, and dread of future wo.
Far be the ghastly crew! And in their stead
Let cheerful Memory from her purest cells
Lead forth a goodly train of Virtues fair,
Cherish'd in earliest youth, now paying back
With tenfold usury the pious care,
And pouring o'er my wounds the heavenly balm
Of conscious innocence. But chiefly, Thou,
Whom soft-ey'd Pity once led down from Heav'n,
To bleed for man, to teach him how to live,
And, oh! still harder lesson! how to die:
Disdain not Thou to smooth the restless bed
Of Sickness and of Pain. Forgive the tear
That feeble Nature drops, calm all her fears,
Wake all her hopes, and animate her faith,
Till my rapt soul, anticipating Heaven,
Bursts from the thraldom of incumbering clay,
And on the wing of Ecstasy upborne,
Springs into Liberty, and Light, and Life.

THE PASSIONS.

When Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Throng'd around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possess'd beyond the Muse's painting;
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, refin'd;
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fir'd,
Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspir'd,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatch'd her instruments of sound;
And as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for Madness rul'd the hour)
Would prove his own expressive power.

First, Fear, his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd, his eyes on fire,
In lightnings own'd his secret stings,
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woful measures, wan Despair,
Low sullen sounds, his grief beguil'd;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air;
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure!
Still it whisper'd promis'd pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong,
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She call'd on Echo still through all the song,
And where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden hair.

And longer had she sung—but, with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose,
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in thunder down.
And, with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of wo.
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat;
And tho' sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity at his side
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien;
While each strain'd ball of sight seem'd bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd,
Sad proof of thy distressful state!
Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd,
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on Hate.
With eyes uprais'd, as one inspir'd,
Pale Melancholy sat retir'd,
And from her wild sequester'd seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Pour'd through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels join'd the sound;
Thro' glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or o'er some haunted streams with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But, O! how altered was its sprightlier tone!
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,
Blew an aspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call, to Faun and Dryad known;
The oak-crown'd sisters, and their chaste-ey'd queen,
Satyrs and sylvan boys were seen
Peeping from forth their alleys green;
Brown Exercise rejoic'd to hear,
And Sport leap'd up, and seiz'd his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial.
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand address'd,
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he lov'd the best.
They would have thought, who heard the strain,
They saw in Tempe's vale her native maids,
Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing;
While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
Love fram'd with Mirth a gay fantastic round:
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound,
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of pleasure, wisdom's aid,
Why, Goddess, why, to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As in that lov'd Athenian bower,
You learn'd an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O nymph endear'd,
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to virtue, fancy, art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording sister's page—
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,

Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age,
Ev'n all at once together found
Cæcilia's mingled world of sound—
O, bid our vain endeavours cease,
Revive the just designs of Greece,
Return in all thy simple state,
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

DESPONDENCY.

Oppressed with grief, oppress'd with care,
A burden more than I can bear,
I sit me down and sigh :
O life ! thou art a galling load,
A long, a rough, a weary road,
To wretches such as I !
Dim-backward as I cast my view,
What sickening scenes appear !
What sorrows yet may pierce me through,
Too justly I may fear !
Still caring, despairing,
Must be my bitter doom ;
My woes here shall close ne'er,
But with the closing tomb !

Happy ! ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard !
Ev'n when the wished end's denied,
Yet, while the busy means are plied,
They bring ther own reward :
Whilst I, a hope-abandon'd wight,
Unfitted with an aim,
Meet every sad returning night
And joyless morn the same.

You bustling and justling
Forget each grief and pain;
I' listless, yet restless,
Find every prospect vain.

How blest the Solitary's lot,
Who, all-forgetting, all forgot,
Within his humble cell,
The cavern wild with tangling roots,
Sits o'er his newly-gather'd fruits,
Beside his crystal well!
Or haply to his evening thought,
By unfrequented stream,
The ways of man are distant brought,
A faint-collected dream:
While praising, and raising
His thoughts to Heaven on high,
As wand'ring, meand'ring,
He views the solemn sky.

Than I, no lonely Hermit plac'd
Where never human footstep trac'd,
Less fit to play the part,
The lucky moment to improve,
And just to stop, and just to move,
With self-respecting art:
But ah! those pleasures, loves and joys
Which I too keenly taste,
The Solitary can despise,
Can want, and yet be blest!

He needs not, he heeds not,
Or human love or hate;
Whilst I here, must cry here,
At perfidy ingrate!

Oh! enviable early days,
When dancing thoughtless Pleasure's maze,
To Care, to Guilt unknown!
How ill exchang'd for riper times,
To feel the follies or the crimes
Of others, or my own!
Ye tiny elves, that guiltless sport
Like linnets in the bush,
Ye little know the ills ye court,
When manhood is your wish!
The losses, the crosses,
That active man engage,
The fears all, the tears all,
Of dim declining age!

ON SLAVERY.

But, ah! what wish can prosper, or what prayer
For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,
Who drive a loathsome traffic, gage and span,
And buy the muscles and the bones of man?
The tender ties of father, husband, friend,
All bonds of nature, in that moment end;
And each endures, while yet he draws his breath,
A stroke as fatal as the scythe of death.
The sable warrior, frantic with regret
Of her he loves, and never can forget,
Loses in tears the far receding shore,
But not the thought that they must meet no more
Depriv'd of her and freedom at a blow,
What has he left that he can yet forego?
Yes, to deep sadness sullenly resign'd,
He feels his body's bondage in his mind;
Puts off his generous nature; and to suit
His manners with his fate, puts on the brute.
Oh most degrading of all ills that wait
On man, a mourner in his best estate!
All other sorrows virtue may endure,
And find submission more than half a cure;
Grief is itself a med'cine, and bestow'd
T' improve the fortitude that bears a load;

To teach the wanderer, as his woes increase,
The path of wisdom, all whose paths are peace.
But slavery—virtue dreads it as her grave;
Patience itself is meanness in a slave:
Or if the will and sovereignty of God
Bid suffer it awhile, and kiss the rod;
Wait for the dawning of a brighter day,
And snap the chain the moment when you may
Nature imprints upon whate'er we see,
That has a heart and life in it, Be free!
The beasts are charter'd, neither age nor force
Can quell the love of freedom in a horse:
He breaks the cord that held him at the rack,
And, conscious of an unincumber'd back,
Snuffs up the morning air, forgets the rein,
Loose fly his forelock, and his simple mane;
Responsive to the distant neigh he neighs,
Nor stops, till, overleaptng all delays,
He finds the pasture where his fellows graze.

HYMN ON SOLITUDE.

Hail, mildly pleasing Solitude,
Companion of the wise and good;
But from whose holy piercing eye,
The herd of fools and villains fly.
Oh! how I love with thee to walk,
And listen to thy whisper'd talk,
Which innocence and truth imparts,
And melts the most obdurate hearts.
A thousand shapes you wear with ease,
And still in every shape you please.
Now wrapt in some mysterious dream,
A lone philosopher you seem;
Now quick from hill to vale you fly,
And now you sweep the vaulted sky.
A shepherd next you haunt the plain,
And warble forth your oaten strain.
A lover now, with all the grace
Of that sweet passion in your face;
Then, calm'd to friendship, you assume
The gentle-looking Hartford's bloom,
As, with her Musidora, she
(Her Musidora fond of thee)
Amid the long withdrawing vale,
Awakes the rivall'd nightingale.

Thine is the balmy breath of morn,
Just as the dew-bent rose is born;
And while meridian fervours beat,
Thine is the woodland dumb retreat;
But chief, when evening scenes decay,
And the faint landscape swims away,
Thine is the doubtful soft decline,
And that best hour of musing thine.

Descending ages bless thy train,
The virtues of the sage and swain;
Plain innocence in white array'd
Before thee lifts her fearless head:
Religion's beams around thee shine,
And cheer thy glooms with light divine:
About thee sports sweet liberty;
And rapt Urania sings to thee.

Oh, let me pierce thy secret cell,
And in thy deep recesses dwell.
Perhaps from Norwood's oak-clad hill,
When meditation has her fill,
I just may cast my careless eyes
Where London's spiry turrets rise;
Think of its crimes, its cares, its pain,
Then shield me in the woods again.

HYMN TO DARKNESS

Darkness, thou first great parent of us all,
Thou art our great original:
Since from thy universal womb
Does all thou shad'st below, thy numerous offspring come.

Thy wondrous birth is even to Time unknown,
Or, like Eternity, thou'dst none;
Whilst Light did its first being owe
Unto that awful shade it dares to rival now.

Say, in what distant region dost thou dwell,
To Reason inaccessible?
From form and duller matter free,
Thou soar'st above the reach of man's philosophy.

Involv'd in thee, we first receive our breath,
Thou art our refuge too in death:
Great Monarch of the grave and womb,
Where'er our souls shall go, to thee our bodies come.

The silent globe is struck with awful fear,
When thy majestic shades appear:
Thou dost compose the air and sea,
And Earth a Sabbath keeps, sacred to rest and thee.

In thy serener shades our ghosts delight,
And court the umbrage of the night;
In vaults and gloomy caves they stray,
But fly the morning beams, and sicken at the day.

Though solid bodies dare exclude the light,
Nor will the brightest ray admit;
No substance can thy force repel,
Thou reign'st in depths below, dost in the centre dwell.

The sparkling gems, and ore in mines below,
To thee their beauteous lustre owe;
Tho' form'd within the womb of night,
Bright as their sire they shine, with native rays of light.

When thou dost raise thy venerable head,
And art in genuine night array'd,
Thy negro beauties then delight;
Beauties like polish'd jet, with their own darkness bright.

Thou dost thy smiles impartially bestow,
And know'st no difference here below;
All things appear the same by thee,
Tho' light distinction makes, thou giv'st equality.

Thou, Darkness, art the lover's kind retreat,
And dost the nuptial joys complete:
Thou dost inspire them with thy shade,
Giv'st vigour to the youth, and warm'st the yielding maid.

Calm as the bless'd above the Anchorites dwell
Within their peaceful gloomy cell;
Their minds with heavenly joys are fill'd;
The pleasures Light deny, thy shades for ever yield.

In caves of night, the oracles of old
Did all their mysteries unfold:
Darkness did first Religion grace,
Gave terrors to the God, and reverence to the place.

When the Almighty did on Horeb stand,
Thy shades inclos'd the hallow'd land;
In clouds of night he was array'd,
And venerable darkness his pavilion made.

When he appear'd arm'd in his power and might,
He veil'd the beatific light;
When terrible with majesty,
In tempests he gave laws, and clad himself in thee.

Ere the foundation of the earth was laid,
Or brighter firmament was made;
Ere matter, time, or place was known,
Thou, Monarch, Darkness, sway'dst these spacious realms alone.

But now the moon (though gay with borrow'd light)
Invades thy scanty lot of Night:
By rebel subjects thou'rt betray'd,
The anarchy of stars depose their monarch, Shade.

Yet fading Light its empire must resign,
And Nature's power submit to thine:
And universal ruin shall erect thy throne,
And Fate confirm thy kingdom evermore thy own.

STANZAS ON WOMAN.

WHEN lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can sooth her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom—is to die.

EDWIN AND ANGELINA.

A BALLAD.

"Turn, gentle Hermit of the dale,
"And guide my lonely way,
"To where yon taper cheers the vale,
"With hospitable ray.

"For here forlorn and lost I tread,
"With fainting steps and slow;
"Where wilds immeasurably spread,
"Seem length'ning as I go."

"Forbear, my son," the Hermit cries,
"To tempt the dangerous gloom;
"For yonder faithless phantom flies
"To lure thee to thy doom.

"Here to the houseless child of want
"My door is open still;
"And though my portion is but scant,
"I give it with good will.

"Then turn to-night, and freely share
"Whate'er my cell bestows;
"My rushy couch and frugal fare,
"My blessing and repose.

"No flocks that range the valley free,
"To slaughter I condemn;
"Taught by that power that pities me,
"I learn to pity them:

"But from the mountain's grassy side
"A guiltless feast I bring;
"A scrip with herbs and fruits supply'd,
"And water from the spring.

"Then pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego
"All earth-born cares are wrong;
"Man wants but little here below,
"Nor wants that little long."

Soft as the dew from Heav'n descends,
His gentle accents fell:
The modest stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.

Far in a wilderness obscure
The lonely mansion lay,
A refuge to the neighb'ring poor,
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Requir'd a master's care;
The wicket, op'ning with a latch,
Receiv'd the harmless pair.

And now, when busy crowds retire
To take their evening rest,
The Hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheer'd his pensive guest:

And spread his vegetable store,
And gayly press'd, and smil'd;
And, skill'd in legendary lore,
The ling'ring hours beguil'd.

Around in sympathetic mirth
Its tricks the kitten tries,
The cricket chirrups in the hearth,
The crackling faggot flies.

But nothing could a charm impart
To sooth the stranger's wo;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

His rising cares the Hermit spy'd,
With answ'ring care oppress't:
"And whence, unhappy youth," he cry'd,
"The sorrows of thy breast?

"From better habitations spurn'd,
"Reluctant dost thou rove?
"Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
"Or unregarded love?

"Alas! the joys that fortune brings
"Are trifling, and decay;
"And those who prize the paltry things,
More trifling still than they.

"And what is friendship but a name,
"A charm that lulls to sleep;
"A shade that follows wealth or fame,
"But leaves the wretch to weep?

"And love is still an emptier sound,
"The modern fair-one's jest:
"On earth unseen, or only found
To warm the turtle's nest.

"For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
"And spurn the sex," he said:
But while he spoke, a rising blush
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

Surpris'd he sees new beauties rise,
Swift mantling to the view;
Like colours o'er the morning skies,
As bright, as transient too.

The bashful look, the rising breast,
Alternate spread alarms
The lovely stranger stands confest
A maid, in all her charms.

"And ah! forgive a stranger rude,
"A wretch forlorn," she cry'd;
"Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude
"Where Heav'n and you reside.

"But let a maid thy pity share,
"Whom love has taught to stray:
"Who seeks for rest, but finds Despair
"Companion of her way.

"My father liv'd beside the Tyne,
"A wealthy lord was he;
"And all his wealth was mark'd as mine,
"He had but only me.

"To win me from his tender arms
"Unnumber'd suitors came;
"Who prais'd me for imputed charms,
"And felt, or feign'd a flame.

"Each hour a mercenary crowd
"With richest proffers strove;
"Amongst the rest young Edwin bow'd
"But never talk'd of love.

"In humble simplest habit clad,
"No wealth nor power had he;
"Wisdom and worth were all he had,
"But these were all to me

" And when, beside me in the dale,
" He carol'd lays of love,
" His breath lent fragrance to the gale,
" And music to the grove.

" The blossom opening to the day,
" The dews of Heav'n refin'd,
" Could nought of purity display
" To emulate his mind.

" The dew, the blossom on the tree,
" With charms inconstant shine ;
" Their charms were his, but wo to me,
" Their constancy was mine.

" For still I try'd each fickle art,
" Importunate and vain ;
" And while his passion touch'd my heart,
" I triumph'd in his pain.

" Till quite dejected with my scorn,
" He left me to my pride ;
" And sought a solitude forlorn,
" In secret, where he died.

" But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
" And well my life shall pay ;
" I'll seek the solitude he sought,
" And stretch me where he lay.

"And there forlorn despairing hid,
"I'll lay me down and die;
"'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
"And so for him will I."

"Forbid it Heav'n!" the Hermit cry'd,
And clasp'd her to his breast:
The wond'ring fair one turned to chide,—
'Twas Edwin's self that prest.

"Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
"My charmer, turn to see
"Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
"Restor'd to love and thee.

"Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
"And every care resign:
"And shall we never, never part,
"My life—my all that's mine?

"No, never from this hour to part,
"We'll live and love so true;
"The sigh that rends thy constant heart,
"Shall break thy Edwin's too."

ELEGY,

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day;
The lowing herds wind slowly o'er the lea;
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimm'ring landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds;
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds.

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain,
Of such, as wand'ring near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath these rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense breathing morn,
The swallow, twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees, the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield;
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke:
How jocund did they drive their team a-field!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure:
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await, alike, the inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead—but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these a fault,
If mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can story'd urn, or animated bust,
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or flatt'ry sooth the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps, in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart, once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre:

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark, unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest;
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nations eyes,

Their lot forbade; nor circumscrib'd alone,
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind·

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame:
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride,
With incense kindled at the muse's flame.

Far from the madd'ning crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray—
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life,
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralists to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resign'd;
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies;
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted sires.

For thee, who mindful of the unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate,
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate.

Haply, some hoary headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn,
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

Hard by yon wood, now smiling, as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove:
Now drooping, woful wan, like one forlorn,
Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

One morn I miss'd him on th' accustom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree;
Another came, nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he.

The next, with dirges due, in sad array,
Slow through the churchway path we saw him borne,
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
'Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH.

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere:
Heaven did a recompense as largely send.
He gave to mis'ry all he had—a tear;
He gain'd from heaven('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they, alike, in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

BEAM OF TRANQUILLITY.

A BEAM of tranquillity smil'd in the west,
The storms of the morning pursued us no more,
And the wave, while it welcom'd the moment of rest,
Still heav'd, as remembering ills that were o'er!

Serenely my heart took the hue of the hour,
Its passions were sleeping, were mute as the dead,
And the spirit becalm'd but remember'd their power,
As the billow the form of the gale that was fled!

I thought of the days, when to pleasure alone
My heart ever granted a wish or a sigh;
When the saddest emotion my bosom had known,
Was pity for those who were wiser than I!

I felt, how the pure, intellectual fire
In luxury loses its heavenly ray;
How soon, in the lavishing cup of desire,
The pearl of the soul may be melted away!

And I pray'd of that Spirit who lighted the flame,
That pleasure no more might its purity dim;
And that sullied but little, or brightly the same,
I might give back the gem I had borrow'd from him!

The thought was ecstatic! I felt as if Heaven
Had already the wreath of eternity shown;
As if, passion all chasten'd and error forgiven,
My heart had begun to be purely its own!

I look'd to the west, and the beautiful sky
Which morning had clouded, was clouded no more—
"Oh! thus," I exclaim'd, "can a heavenly Eye
"Shed light on the soul that was darken'd before!"*

* Ps. iv. 6—Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

A CANADIAN BOAT SONG,

WRITTEN ON THE RIVER ST. LAWRENCE

FAINTLY as tolls the evening chime,
Our voices keep tune, and our oars keep time.
Soon as the woods on shore look dim,
We'll sing at St. Ann's our parting hymn
Row, brothers, row, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near and the daylight's past,

Why should we yet our sail unfurl?
There is not a breath the blue wave to curl;
But when the wind blows off the shore,
Oh, sweetly we'll rest our weary oar.
Blow, breezes, blow, &c.

Utawa's tide! this trembling moon
Shall see us float over thy surges soon.
Saint of this green Isle! hear our prayer,
Grant us cool heavens and favouring air!
Blow, breezes, blow, &c.

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.

A DIRGE.

When chill November's surly blast
Made fields and forests bare,
One ev'ning as I wander'd forth
Along the banks of Ayr,
I spy'd a man, whose aged step
Seem'd weary, worn with care;
His face was furrow'd o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair

Young stranger, whither wand'rest thou?
(Began the rev'rend Sage;)
Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful Pleasure's rage?
Or haply prest with cares and woes,
Too soon thou hast began
To wander forth, with me, to mourn
The miseries of Man.

The Sun that overhangs yon moors,
Outspreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labour to support
A haughty lordling's pride;
I've seen yon weary winter-sun
Twice forty times return;

And every time has added proofs,
That Man was made to mourn.

O Man! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time?
Mis-spending all thy precious hours,
Thy glorious youthful prime.
Alternate Follies take the sway;
Licentious Passions burn;
Which tenfold force gives Nature's law,
That man was made to mourn.

Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood's active might;
Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right;
But see him on the edge of life,
With Cares and Sorrows worn,
Then Age and Want, oh! ill match'd pair!
Show man was made to mourn.

A few seem favourites of Fate,
In pleasure's lap carest;
Yet, think not all the Rich and Great
Are likewise truly blest.
But oh! what crowds in every land,
Are wretched and forlorn!
Through weary life this lesson learn,
That man was made to mourn.

Many and sharp the num'rous ills
Inwoven with our frame;

More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, Remorse, and Shame;
And Man, whose heav'n erected face
The smiles of love adorn,
Man's inhumanity to Man
Makes countless thousands mourn.

See yonder poor o'erlabour'd wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a Brother of the Earth
To give him leave to toil;
And see his Lordly fellow-worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, though a weeping wife,
And helpless offspring mourn.

If I'm design'd yon lordling's slave,
By Nature's law design'd,
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty, or scorn?
Or why has Man the will and pow'r
To make his fellow mourn?

Yet, let not this too much, my Son,
Disturb thy youthful breast;
This partial view of human kind
Is surely not the last.
The poor, oppressed, honest man,
Had never sure been born,

Had there not been some recompense
To comfort those that mourn.

O Death! the poor man's dearest friend,
The kindest and the best;
Welcome the hour my aged limbs
Are laid with thee at rest.
The Great, the Wealthy, fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn;
But oh! a blest relief to those
That weary-laden mourn.

O'CONNOR'S CHILD:

OR,

THE FLOWER OF LOVE LIES BLEEDING.

Oh! once the harp of Innisfail*
Was strung full high to notes of gladness;
But yet it often told a tale
Of more prevailing sadness.
Sad was the note, and wild its fall,
As winds that moan at night forlorn
Along the isles of Fion-Gael,
When for O'Connor's child to mourn,
The harper told, how lone, how far
From any mansion's twinkling star,
From any path of social men,
r voice but from the fox's den,
The Lady in the desert dwelt,
And yet no wrongs, no fear she felt:
Say why should dwell in place so wild
The lovely pale O'Connor's child?

Sweet lady! she no more inspires
Green Erin's heart with beauty's pow'r
As in the palace of her sires
She bloom'd a peerless flow'r.

*The ancient name of Ireland.

Gone from her hand and bosom, gone,
The regal broche, the jewell'd ring,
That o'er her dazzling whiteness shone
Like dews on lilies of the spring.
Yet why, though fall'n her brother's kerne *
Beneath De Bourgo's battle stern,
While yet in Leinster unexplor'd,
Her friends survive the English sword;
Why lingers she from Erin's host,
So far on Galway's shipwreck'd coast;
Why wanders she a huntress wild—
The lovely pale O'Connor's child?

And fix'd on empty space, why burn
Her eyes with momentary wildness:
And wherefore do they then return
To more than woman's mildness?
Dishevell'd are her raven locks.
On Connocht Moran's name she calls
And oft amidst the lonely rocks
She sings sweet madrigals.
Plac'd in the foxglove and the moss,
Behold a parted warrior's cross!
That is the spot where evermore,
The lady, at her shieling† door,
Enjoys that in communion sweet:
The living and the dead can meet;
For lo! to love-lorn fantasy,
The hero of her heart is nigh.

* Kerne, the ancient Irish foot Soldiery
† Rude hut, or cabin.

Bright as the bow that spans the storm,
In Erin's yellow vesture clad,
A son of light, a lovely form,
He comes and makes her glad:
Now on the grass-green turf he sits,
His tassell'd horn beside him laid;
Now o'er the hills in chase he flits.
The hunter and the deer a shade!
Sweet mourner! those are shadows vain,
That cross the twilight of her brain:
Yet she will tell you, she is blest,
Of Connocht Moran's tomb possess'd,
More richly than in Aghrim's bow'r,
When bards high prais'd her beauty's pow'r,
And kneeling pages offer'd up
The morat* in a golden cup.

'A hero's bride! this desert bow'r,
'It ill befits thy gentle breeding:
'And wherefore dost thou love this flow'r
'To call—My love lies bleeding?'
"This purple flow'r my tears have nurs'd
A hero's blood supply'd its bloom:
I love it, for it was the first
That grew on Connocht Moran's tomb
Oh! hearken, stranger, to my voice!
This desert mansion is my choice;
And blest, tho' fatal, be the star
That led me to its wilds afar:

* A drink made of the juice of mulberry mixed with honey

For here these pathless mountains free
Gave shelter to my love and me;
And every rock and very stone
Bare witness that he was my own.

"O'Connor's child, I was the bud
Of Erin's royal tree of glory;
But wo to them that wrapt in blood
The tissue of my story!
Still as I clasp my burning brain,
A death-scene rushes on my sight:
It rises o'er and o'er again,
The bloody feud,—the fatal night,
When chafing Connocht Moran's scorn,
They call'd my hero basely born;
And bade him choose a meaner bride
Than from O'Connor's house of pride.
Their tribe, they said, their high degree,
Was sung in Tara's psaltery;†
Witness their Earth's victorious brand,‡
And Cathal of the bloody hand,—
Glory, (they said,) and power, and honour,
Were in the mansion of O'Connor;
But he, my lov'd one, bore in field
A meaner crest upon his shield.

"Ah, brothers! what did it avail,
That fiercely and triumphantly

† The psalter of Tara was the great national register of the ancient Irish.
‡ Vide the note upon the victories of the house of O'Connor.

Ye fought the English of the pale,
And stemm'd De Bourgo's chivalry?
And what was it to love and me,
That barons by your standard rode;
Or beal-fires† for your jubilee,
Upon an hundred mountains glow'd.
What tho' the lords of tower and dome
From Shannon to the North-Sea foam,—
Thought ye your iron hands of pride
Could break the knot that love had tied?
No;—let the eagle change his plume,
The leaf its hue, the flow'r its bloom;
But ties around this heart were spun,
That could not, would not, be undone!

"At bleating of the wild-watch fold
Thus sang my love—'O come with me!
'Our bark is on the lake: behold,
'Our steeds are fasten'd to the tree.
'Come far from Castle Connor's clans—
'Come with thy belted forestere,
'And I beside the lake of swans,
'Shall hunt for thee the fallow deer,
'And build thy hut and bring thee home
'The wild fowl, and the honey-comb;
'And berries from the wood provide,
'And play my clarshech‡ by thy side.

† Fires lighted on May-day on the hill tops by the Irish
‡ The harp.

'Then come, my love!'---How could I stay!
Our nimble stag-hounds track'd the way,
And I pursu'd by moonless skies,
The light of Connocht Moran's eyes.

"And fast and far, before the star
Of day-spring rush'd we through the glade,
And saw at dawn the lofty bawn†
Of Castle-Connor fade.
Sweet was to us the hermitage
Of this unplough'd, untrodden shore:
Like birds all joyous from the cage,
From man's neglect we lov'd it more.
And well he knew, my huntsman dear,
To search the game with hawk and spear;
While I, his evening food to dress,
Would sing to him in happiness.
But oh, that midnight of despair!
When I was doom'd to rend my hair:
The night, to me of shrieking sorrow!
The night, to him that had no morrow!

"When all was hush'd at eventide,
I hear'd the baying of their beagle:
Be hush'd! my Connocht Moran cried,
'Tis but the screaming of the eagle.
Alas! 'twas not the eyrie's sound,
Their bloody bands had track'd us out:
Up-list'ning starts our couchant hound---
And hark! again, that nearer shout

† Ancient fortifications.

Brings faster on the murderers.
Spare—spare him—Bazil—Desmond fierce!
In vain—no voice the adder charms;
Their weapons cross'd my sheltering arms;
Another's sword has laid him low—
Another's and another's;
And every hand that dealt the blow—
Ah me! it was a brother's!
Yes, when his moanings died away,
Their iron hands had dug the clay,
And o'er his burial turf they trod,
And I beheld—Oh! God! Oh! God!
His life-blood oozing from the sod!

"Warm in his death-wounds sepulchred,
Alas! my warrior's spirit brave,
Nor mass nor ulla-lulla* heard,
Lamenting sooth his grave.
Dragg'd to their hated mansion back,
How long in thraldom's grasp I lay,
I know not, for my soul was black,
And knew no change of night or day.
One night of horror round me grew,
Or if I saw, or felt, or knew,
'Twas but when those grim visages,
The angry brothers of my race,
Glar'd on each eye-ball's aching throb,
And check'd my bosom's pow'r to sob;
Or when my heart with pulses drear,
Beat like a death-watch to my ear.

* The Irish lamentation for the dead.

"But Heav'n, at last, my soul's eclipse
Did with a vision bright inspire:
I woke, and felt upon my lips
A prophetess's fire.
Thrice in the east a war-drum beat,
I heard the Saxon's trumpet sound,
And rang'd as to the judgment seat
My guilty, trembling brothers round.
Clad in the helm and shield they came;
For now De Bourgo's sword and flame
Had ravag'd Ulster's boundaries,
And lighted up the midnight skies.
The standard of O'Connor's sway
Was in the turret where I lay;
That standard, with so dire a look,
As ghastly shone the moon and pale,
I gave—that every bosom shook
Beneath its iron mail.

"And go! I cried, the combat seek,
Ye hearts that unappalled bore
The anguish of a sister's shriek,
Go!—and return no more!
For sooner guilt the ordeal brand
Shall grasp unhurt, than ye shall hold
The banner with victorious hand,
Beneath a sister's curse unrolled.
Oh stranger! by my country's loss!
And by my love! and by the cross!
I swear I never could have spoke
The curse that sever'd nature's yoke;

But that a spirit o'er me stood,
And fir'd me with the wrathful mood;
And frenzy to my heart was giv'n,
To speak the malison of heav'n.

"They would have cross'd themselves all mute,
They would have pray'd to burst the spell;
But at the stamping of my foot
Each hand down pow'rless fell,
And go to Athunree !‡ I cried,
High lift the banner of your pride!
But know that where its sheet unrolls
The weight of blood is on your souls!
Go where the havoc of your kerne
Shall float as high as mountain fern!
Men shall no more your mansion know!
The nettles on your hearth shall grow!
Dead as the green oblivious flood,
That mantles by your walls, shall be
The glory of O'Connor's blood
Away! away to Athunree!
Where downward when the sun shall fall
The raven's wing shall be your pall;
And not a vassal shall unlace
The vizor from your dying face!

"A bolt that overhung our dome
Suspended till my curse was giv'n,
Soon as it pass'd these lips of foam
Peal'd in the blood-red heav'n.

‡ The battle fought in 1314, which decided the fate of Ireland.

Dire was the look that o'er their backs
The angry parting brothers threw ;
But now, behold ! like cataracts,
Come down the hills in view
O'Connor's plumed partizans,
Thrice ten Innisfallian clans
Were marching to their doom :
A sudden storm their plumage toss'd,
A flash of lightning o'er them cross'd,
And all again was gloom ;
But once again in heav'n the bands
Of thunder spirits clapt their hands.

" Stranger ! I fled the home of grief
At Connocht Moran's tomb to fall ;
I found the helmet of my chief,
His bow still hanging on our wall :
And took it down, and vow'd to rove
This desert place a huntress bold ;
Nor would I change my buried love
For any heart of living mould.
No ! for I am a hero's child,
I'll hunt my quarry in the wild ;
And still my home this mansion make,
Of all unheeded and unheeding,
And cherish, for my warrior's sake,
The flower of love lies bleeding."

THE

SOLDIER'S DREAM.

Our bugles sang truce---for the night cloud had lower'd,
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpower'd,
The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw,
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain;
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw,
And thrice ere the morning I dream't it again.

Methought from the battle-field's dreadful array,
Far, far I had roam'd on a desolate track;
'Twas autumn---and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers, that welcom'd me back.

I flied to the pleasant fields travers'd so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

Then pledg'd we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore
From my home and my weeping friends never to part;
My little ones kiss'd me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobb'd aloud in her fulness of heart.

Stay, stay with us---rest, thou art weary and worn :---
And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay;
But sorrow returned with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

THE DYING NEGRO.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Poem was occasioned by a fact which had recently happened at the time of its first publication, in 1773. A Negro, belonging to the Captain of a West-India-man, having agreed to marry a white woman, his fellow-servant, in order to effect his purpose, left his master's house, and procured himself to be baptized; but being detected and taken, he was sent on board the Captain's vessel then lying in the river; where, finding no chance of escaping, and preferring death to another voyage to America, he took an opportunity of stabbing himself. As soon as his determination is fixed, he is supposed to write this epistle to his intended wife.

'ARM'D with thy sad last gift—the pow'r to die!
Thy shafts, stern Fortune, now I can defy:
Thy dreadful mercy points at length the shore
Where all is peace, and men are slaves no more!
This weapon, ev'n in chains, the brave can wield,
And, vanquish'd quit triumphantly the field.
Beneath such wrongs let pallid Christians live,
Such they can perpetrate, and may forgive.
Yet while I tread that gulf's tremendous brink,
Where nature shudders, and where beings sink,
Ere yet this hand a life of torment close,

And end by one determin'd stroke my woes,
Is there a fond regret which moves my mind
To pause, and cast a lingering look behind?
O my lov'd bride!---for I have call'd thee mine,
Dearer than life, whom I with life resign,
For thee ev'n here this faithful heart shall glow,
A pang shall rend me, and a tear shall flow.
How shall I sooth thy grief, since fate denies
Thy pious duties to my closing eyes?
I cannot clasp thee in a last embrace,
Nor gaze in silent anguish on thy face;
I cannot raise these fettered arms for thee,
To ask that mercy Heav'n denies to me:
Yet let thy tender breast my sorrows share,
Bleed for my wounds, and feel my deep despair.
Yet let thy tears bedew a wretch's grave,
Whom Fate forbade thy tenderness to save.
Receive these sighs—to thee my soul I breathe,
Fond love in dying groans is all I can bequeath.
'Why did I, slave, beyond my lot aspire
Why didst thou fan the inauspicious fire?
For thee I bade my drooping soul revive;
For thee alone I could have borne to live;
And love, I said, shall make me large amends
For persecuting foes, and faithless friends:
Fool that I was! inur'd so long to pain,
To trust to hope, or dream of joy again.
Joy, stranger guest, my easy faith betray'd,
And love now points to death's eternal shade:
There, while I rest from misery's galling load,
Be thou the care of ever pitying God;

Nor may that demon's unpropitious pow'r,
Who shed his influence on my natal hour,
Pursue thee too with unrelenting hate,
And blend with mine the colour of thy fate.
For thee may those soft hours return again,
When Pleasure led thee smiling o'er the plain,
Ere, like some hell-born spectre of dismay,
I cross'd thy path, and darken'd all the way.
Ye waving groves, which from this cell I view!
Ye meads, now glittering with the morning dew!
Ye flowers, which blush on yonder hated shore,
That at my baneful step shall fade no more,
A long farewell!—I ask no vernal bloom—
No pageant wreaths to wither on my tomb.
Let serpents hiss and night-shade blacken there,
To mark the friendless victim of despair!
'And better in th' untimely grave to rot,
The world and all its cruelties forgot,
Than dragg'd once more beyond the western main,
To groan beneath some dastard planter's chain,
Where my poor countrymen in bondage wait
The slow enfranchisement of lingering fate.
Oh! my heart sinks, my dying eyes o'erflow,
When memory paints the picture of their wo!
For I have seen them, ere the dawn of day,
Rous'd by the lash, begin their cheerless way:
Greeting with groans unwelcome morn's return,
While rage and shame their gloomy bosoms burn:
And, chiding every hour the slow-pac'd sun,
Endure their toils till all his race was run;
No eye to mark their sufferings with a tear,

No friend to comfort, and no hope to cheer ;
Then like the dull unpitied brutes repair
To stalls as wretched, and as coarse a fare ;
Thank Heav'n, one day of misery was o'er,
And sink to sleep, and wish to wake no more.—
Sleep on ! ye lost companions of my woes,
For whom in death this tear of pity flows ;
Sleep and enjoy the only boon of Heav'n,
To you in common with your tyrants giv'n !
O while soft slumber from their couches flies,
Still may the balmy blessing steep your eyes ;
In swift oblivion lull awhile your woes,
And brightest visions gladden the repose !
Let Fancy, then, unconscious of the change,
Through our own fields and native forests range ;
Waft ye to each once-haunted stream and grove,
And visit every long-lost scene ye love !
I sleep no more—nor in the midnight shade
Invoke ideal phantoms to my aid :
Nor wake again, abandon'd and forlorn,
To find each dear delusion fled at morn ;
A slow consuming death let others wait,
I snatch destruction from unwilling fate.
Yon ruddy streaks the rising sun proclaim,
That never more shall beam upon my shame ;
Bright orb ! for others let thy glory shine,
Mature the golden grain and purple vine,
While fetter'd Afric still for Europe toils,
And Nature's plunderers riot on her spoils ;
Be theirs the gifts thy partial rays supply,
Be mine the gloomy privilege to die.

'And thou, whose impious avarice and pride
The holy Cross to my sad brows denied,
Forbade me Nature's common rights to claim,
Or share with thee a Christian's sacred name;
Thou too, farewell!—for not beyond the grave
Extends thy power, nor is my dust thy slave.
In vain Heav'n spreads so wide the swelling sea,
Vast wat'ry barrier, 'twixt thy world and me;
Swift round the globe, by earth nor Heav'n control'd,
Fly stern oppression, and dire lust of gold.
Where'er the hell-hounds mark their bloody way,
Still nature groans, and man becomes their prey.
In the wild wastes of Afric's sandy plain,
Where roars the lion through his drear domain,
To curb the savage monarch in the chase,
There too Heav'n planted man's majestic race;
Bade reason's sons with nobler titles rise,
Lift high their brow sublime, and scan the skies.
What though the sun in his meridian blaze
Dart on their naked limbs his scorching rays:
What though no rosy tints adorn their face,
No silken tresses shine with flowing grace:
Yet of ethereal temper are their souls,
And in their veins the tide of honour rolls:
And valour kindles there the hero's flame,
Contempt of death, and thirst of martial fame;
And pity melts the sympathizing breast,
Ah! fatal virtue!—for the brave distress'd.
'My tortur'd bosom, sad remembrance spare;
Why dost thou plant thy keenest daggers there
And show me what I was, and aggravate despair?

Ye streams of Gambia, and thou sacred shade!
Where in my youth's first dawn I joyful stray'd,
Oft have I rous'd amid your caverns dim,
The howling tiger, and the lion grim!
In vain they gloried in their headlong force,
My javelin pierc'd them in their raging course.
But little did my boding mind bewray,
The victor and his hopes were doom'd a prey
To human brutes more fell, more cruel far than they.
Ah! what avails the conqueror's bloody meed,
The generous purpose, or the dauntless deed?
This hapless breast expos'd on every plain,
And liberty preferr'd to life in vain?
Fall'n are my trophies, blasted is my fame,
Myself become a thing without a name,
The sport of haughty lords, and ev'n of slaves the shame
'Curs'd be the winds, and curs'd the tides which bore
These European robbers to our shore!
O be that hour involv'd in endless night,
When first their streamers met my wandering sight!
I call'ed the warriors from the mountain's steep,
To meet these unknown terrors of the deep;
Rous'd by my voice, their generous bosom glow,
They rush indignant and demand the foe,
And poise the darts of death, and twang the bended bow
When lo! advancing o'er the sea-beat plain,
I mark'd the leader of a warlike train;
Unlike his features to our swarthy race;
And golden hair play'd round his ruddy face.
While with insidious smile and lifted hand,
He thus accosts our unsuspecting band:

Ye valiant chiefs, whom love of glory leads
To martial combats, and heroic deeds;
No fierce invader your retreat explores,
No hostile banner waves along your shores.
From the dread tempests of the deep we fly,
Then lay, ye chiefs, these pointed terrors by:
And O, your hospitable cares extend,
So may ye never need the aid ye lend!
So may ye still repeat to every grove
The songs of freedom, and the strains of love!'
Soft as the accents of the traitor flow,
We melt with pity, and unbend the bow;
With liberal hand our choicest gifts we bring,
And point the wanderers to the freshest spring.
Nine days we feasted on the Gambian strand,
And songs of friendship echoed o'er the land.*
When the tenth morn his rising lustre gave,
The chief approach'd me by the sounding wave:
"O, youth," he said, "what gifts can we bestow,
Or how requite the mighty debt we owe?
For lo! propitious to our vows, the gale
With milder omens fills the swelling sail.
To-morrow's sun shall see our ships explore
These deeps, and quit your hospitable shore.
Yet while we linger, let us still employ
The number'd hours in friendship and in joy:

* 'Which way soever I turned my eyes on this spot, I beheld a perfect image of pure nature, an agreeable solitude bounded on every side by charming landscapes; the rural situation of cottages in the midst of trees; the ease and indolence of the negroes reclining under the shade of their spreading foliage; the simplicity of their dress and manners; the whole revived in my mind the idea of our first parents, and I seemed to contemplate the world in its primitive state. They are, generally speaking, very good natured, sociable, and obliging.'—M. Adanson's Voyage to Senegal, &c.

Ascend our ships, their treasures are your own,
And taste the produce of a world unknown."
'He spoke: with fatal eagerness we burn,
And quit the shores, undestin'd to return!
The smiling traitors with insidious care
The goblet proffer, and the feast prepare,
Till dark oblivion shades our closing eyes,
And all disarm'd each fainting warrior lies.
O wretches! to your future evils blind!
O morn for ever present to my mind!
When bursting from the treacherous bands of sleep
Rous'd by the murmurs of the dashing deep,
I woke to bondage and ignoble pains,
And all the horrors of a life in chains!*
Ye Gods of Afric! in that dreadful hour
Where were your thunders and avenging pow'r?
Did not my pray'rs, my groans, my tears, invoke
Your slumbering justice to direct the stroke?
No Power descended to assist the brave,
No lightnings flash'd, and I became a slave.
From lord to lord my wretched carcass sold,
In Christian traffic, for their sordid gold:

* 'As we passed along the coast, we very often lay before a town and fired a gun for the natives to come off, but no soul came near us. At length we learned by some ships that were trading down the coast, that the natives came seldom on board an English ship, for fear of being detained or carried off; yet at last some ventured on board; but if these chanced to spy any arms, they would all immediately take to their canoes, and make the best of their way home.'—Smith's Voyage to Guinea.

† 'It is well known that many of the European nations have, very unjustly and inhumanly, without any provocation, stolen away, from time to time, abundance of the people, not only on this coast, but almost every where in Guinea, who have come on board their ships in a harmless and confiding manner, these they have in great numbers carried away, and sold in the plantations.—J. Barbot's Description of Guinea.

Fate's blackest clouds were gather'd o'er my head;
'Yet when my fortune cast my lot with thine,
And bade beneath one roof our labours join,
Surpris'd I felt the tumults of my breast
Lull'd by thy beauties to unwonted rest.
Delusive hopes my changing soul inflame,
And gentle transports agitate my frame.
What though obscure thy birth, superior grace
Shone in the glowing features of thy face.
Ne'er had my youth such winning softness seen,
Where Afric's sable beauties dance the green,
When some sweet maid receives her lover's vow,
And binds the offer'd chaplet to her brow.
While on thy languid eyes I fondly gaze,
And trembling meet the lustre of their rays,
Thou, gentle virgin, thou didst not despise
The humble homage of a captive's sighs.
By Heav'n abandon'd, and by man betray'd,
Each hope resign'd of comfort or of aid,
Thy generous love could ever sorrow end,
In thee I found a mistress and a friend;
Still as I told the story of my woes,
With heaving sighs thy lovely bosom rose;
The trickling drops of liquid crystal stole
Down thy fair cheek, and mark'd thy pitying soul:
Dear drops! upon my bleeding heart, like balm,
They fell, and soon my tortur'd mind grew calm;
Then my lov'd country, parents, friends forgot;
Heav'n I absolv'd, nor murmur'd at my lot;
Thy sacred smiles could every pang remove,
And liberty became less dear than love.

'And I have loved thee with as pure a fire
As man e'er felt, or woman could inspire:
No pangs like these my pallid tyrants know.
Not such their transports, and not such their woe.
Their softer frames a feeble soul conceal,
A soul unus'd to pity or to feel:
Damp'd by base lucre, and repell'd by fear
Each noble passion faintly blazes here.
Not such the mortals burning Afric breeds,
Mother of virtues, and heroic deeds;
Descended from yon radiant orb, they claim
Sublimer courage, and a fiercer flame.
Nature has there, unchill'd by art, impress'd
Her awful majesty on every breast.
Where'er she leads, impatient of control,
The dauntless Negro rushes to the goal;
Firm in his love, resistless in his hate,
His arm is conquest, and his frown is fate.

'What fond affection in my bosom reigns!
What soft emotions mingle with my pains!
Still as thy form before my mind appears,
My haggard eyes are bath'd in gushing tears;
Thy lov'd idea rushes to my heart,
And stern despair suspends the lifted dart——
O! could I burst these fetters, which restrain
My struggling limbs, and wait thee o'er the main
To some far-distant shore, where ocean roars
In horrid tempests round the gloomy shores!
To some wild mountain's solitary shade,
Where never European faith betray'd;

How joyful could I, of thy love secure,
Meet every danger, every toil endure!
For thee I'd climb the rock, explore the flood,
And tame the famish'd savage of the wood.
When scorching summer drinks the shrinking streams,
My care should screen thee from its sultry beams;
At noon I'd crown thee with the fairest flowers,
At eve I'd lead thee to the safest bowers;
And when bleak winter howl'd around the cave,
For thee his horrors and his storms I'd brave;
Nor snows nor raging winds should damp my soul,
Nor such a night as shrouds the dusky pole:
O'er the dark waves my bounding skiff I'd guide,
To pierce each mightier monster of the tide;
Through frozen forests force my dreadful way,
In their own dens to rouse the beasts of prey;
Nor other blessing ask, if this might prove
How fix'd my passion, and how fond my love.
Then should vain fortune to my sight display
All that her anger now has snatch'd away;
Treasures more vast than Avarice e'er design'd
In midnight visions to a Christian's mind;
The monarch's diadem, the conqueror's meed,
That empty prize for which the valiant bleed;
All that ambition strives to snatch from fate,
All that the gods e'er lavish'd in their hate:
Not these should win thy lover from thy arms,
Or tempt a moment's absence from thy charms;
Indignant would I fly these guilty climes,
And scorn their glories as I hate their crimes!
'But whither does my wandering fancy rove?

Hence, ye wild wishes of desponding love!
Ah! where is now that voice which lull'd my woes?
That angel-face, which sooth'd me to repose?
By Nature tempted, and with passion blind,
Are these the joys hope whisper'd to my mind?
Is this the end of constancy like thine?
Are these the transports of a love like mine?
My hopes, my joys are vanish'd into air,
And now, of all that once engag'd my care,
These chains alone remain, this weapon, and despair!
So be thy life's gay prospects all o'ercast,
All thy fond hopes dire disappointment blast!
Thus end thy golden visions, son of pride!
Whose ruthless ruffians tore me from my bride;
That beauteous prize Heav'n had reserv'd at last,
Sweet recompense for all my sorrows past.
O may thy harden'd bosom never prove
The tender joys of friendship or of love!
Yet may'st thou, doom'd to hopeless flames a prey,
In unrequited passion pine away!
May every transport violate thy rest,
Which tears the jealous lover's gloomy breast!
May secret anguish gnaw thy cruel heart,
Till death in all his terrors wing the dart:
Then, to complete the horror of thy doom,
A favour'd rival smile upon thy tomb!
'Why does my lingering soul her flight delay?
Come, lovely maid, and gild the dreary way!
Come, wildly rushing with disorder'd charms,
And clasp thy bleeding lover in thy arms!
Close his sad eyes, receive his parting breath,

And sooth him sinking to the shades of death!
O! come—thy presence can my pangs beguile,
And bid the inexorable tyrant smile;
Transported will I languish on thy breast,
And sink enraptur'd to eternal rest.
The hate of men, the wrongs of fate forgive,
Forget my woes, and almost wish to live.
Ah! rather fly, lest aught of doubt control
The dreadful purpose labouring in my soul;
Tears must not bend me, nor thy beauties move,
This hour I triumph over fate and love!

'Again with tenfold rage my bosom burns,
And all the tempest of my soul returns;
Again the furies fire my madding brain,
And death extends his sheltering arms in vain;
For unreveng'd I fall, unpitied die;
And with my blood glut Pride's insatiate eye!

'Thou Christian God! to whom so late I bow'd,
To whom my soul its new allegiance vow'd,
When crimes like these thy injur'd power profane,
O God of Nature! art thou call'd in vain?
Didst thou for this sustain a mortal wound,
While Heav'n, and Earth, and Hell hung trembling round?
That these vile fetters might my body bind,
And agony like this distract my mind?
On thee I call'd with reverential awe,
Ador'd thy wisdom, and embrac'd thy law;
Yet mark thy destin'd convert as he lies,
His groans of anguish, and his livid eyes:
These galling chains polluted with his blood,
Then bid his tongue proclaim thee just and good!

But if too weak thy vaunted power to spare,
Or sufferings move thee not, O hear despair!
Thy hopes and blessings I alike resign,
But let revenge, let swift revenge be mine!
Be this proud bark, which now triumphant rides,
Toss'd by the winds, and shatter'd by the tides!
And may these fiends, who now exulting view
The horrors of my fortune, feel them too!
Be theirs the torment of a lingering fate,
Slow as thy Justice, dreadful as my hate:
Condemn'd to grasp the riven plank in vain,
And chas'd by all the monsters of the main;
And while they spread their sinking arms to thee,
Then let their fainting souls remember me!
'Thanks, righteous God! Revenge shall yet be mine!
Yon flashing lightning gave the dreadful sign
I see the flames of heavenly anger hurl'd,
I hear your thunders shake a guilty world.
The time shall come, the fated hour is nigh,
When guiltless blood shall penetrate the sky;
Amid these horrors, and involving night,
Prophetic visions flash before my sight:
Eternal Justice wakes, and in their turn
The vanquish'd triumph, and the victors mourn;
Lo! Discord, fiercest of th' infernal band,
Fires all her snakes, and waves her flaming brand;
No more proud Commerce courts the western gates,
But marks the lurid skies, and furls her sails;
War mounts his iron car, and at his wheels
In vain soft Pity weeps, and Mercy kneels;
He breathes a savage rage through all the host,

And stains with kindred blood the impious coast;
Then while with horror sickening Nature groans,
And earth and Heaven the monstrous race disowns,
Then the stern Genius of my native land,
With delegated vengeance in his hand,
Shall raging cross the troubled seas, and pour
The plagues of hell on yon devoted shore.
What tides of ruin mark his ruthless way!
How shriek the fiends exulting o'er their prey!
I see their warriors gasping on the ground,
I hear their flaming cities crash around.—
In vain with trembling heart the coward turns,
In vain with generous rage the valiant burns;
One common ruin, one promiscuous grave,
O'erwhelms the dastard, and receives the brave,—
For Afric triumphs!—his avenging rage
No tears can soften, and no blood assuage.
He smites the trembling waves, and at the shock
Their fleets are dash'd upon the pointed rock.
He waves his flaming dart, and o'er their plains,
In mournful silence, Desolation reigns—
Fly swift, ye years!—Arise, thou glorious morn!
Thou great avenger of thy race be born!
The conqueror's palm and deathless fame be thine!
One generous stroke, and liberty be mine!
And now, ye Pow'rs! to whom the brave are dear,
Receive me falling, and your suppliant hear.
To you this unpolluted blood I pour,
To you that spirit which ye gave restore!
I ask no lazy pleasures to possess,
No long eternity of happiness;—

But if unstain'd by voluntary guilt,
At your great call this being I have spilt,
For all the wrongs which innocence I share;
For all I've suffer'd and for all I dare;
O lead me to that spot, that sacred shore,
Where souls are free, and men oppress no more."

Hymn on the Seasons.

These, as they change, Almighty Father! these
Are but the varied God. The rolling year
Is full of thee. Forth in the pleasing spring
Thy beauties walk, thy tenderness and love.
Wide flush the fields: the soft'ning air is balm:
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
And ev'ry sense, and ev'ry heart is joy.
Then comes thy glory in the summer months,
With light and heat refulgent. Then thy sun
Shoots full perfection thro' the swelling year.
And oft thy voice in dreadful thunder speaks;
And oft at dawn, deep noon, or falling eve,
By brooks and groves, in hollow whisp'ring gales.
Thy bounty shines in autumn unconfin'd,
And spreads a common feast for all that lives.
In winter, awful thou! with clouds and storms
Around thee thrown, tempest o'er tempest roll'd,
Majestic darkness! on the whirlwind's wing
Riding sublime, thou bidst the world adore,
And humblest nature with thy northern blast.

Mysterious round! what skill, what force divine,
Deep felt in these appear! a simple train,
Yet so delightful mix'd, with such kind art,
Such beauty and beneficence combin'd;
Shade, unperceiv'd, so soft'ning into shade,
And all so forming an harmonious whole,
That, as they still succeed, they ravish still.
But, wand'ring oft, with brute unconscious gaze,

Man marks not thee; marks not the mighty hand
That, ever busy, wheels the silent spheres;
Works in the secret deep; shoots, steaming, thence
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the spring;
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day;
Feeds every creature; hurls the tempest forth;
And, as on earth this grateful change revolves,
With transport touches all the springs of life.
Nature attend! join, every living soul
Beneath the spacious temple of the sky,
In adoration join; and ardent, raise
One general song! To Him, ye vocal gales,
Breathe soft, whose spirit in your freshness breathes:
Oh! talk of him in solitary glooms!
Where, o'er the rock, the scarcely-waving pine
Fills the brown shade with a religious awe.
And ye, whose bolder note is heard afar,
Who shake th' astonish'd world, lift high to heav'n
Th' impetuous song, and say from whom you rage.
His praise, ye brooks, attune, ye trembling rills,
And let me catch it as I muse along.
Ye headlong torrents, rapid and profound;
Ye softer floods, that lead the humid maze
Along the vale; and thou majestic main,
A secret world of wonders in thyself,
Sound His stupendous praise; whose greater voice
Or bids you roar, or bids your roarings fall.
Soft roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and flow'rs,
In mingled clouds, to Him; whose sun exalts,
Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil paints
Ye forests, bend, ye harvests, wave to Him;

Breathe your still song into the reaper's ear,
As home he goes beneath the joyous moon.
Ye that keep watch in heaven, as earth asleep
Unconscious lies, effuse your mildest beams,
Ye constellations! while your angels strike,
Amid the spangled sky, the silver lyre.
Great source of day! best image here below
Of thy Creator, ever pouring wide,
From world to world, the vital ocean round,
On nature write with ev'ry beam his praise.
The thunder rolls: be hush'd the prostrate world;
While cloud to cloud returns the solemn hymn.
Bleat out afresh, ye hills; ye mossy rocks,
Retain the sound: the broad responsive low,
Ye vallies, raise; for the Great Shepherd reigns,
And his unsuff'ring kingdom yet will come.
Ye woodlands all, awake; a boundless song
Burst from the groves: and when the restless day
Expiring, lays the warbling world asleep,
Sweetest of birds! sweet Philomela, charm
The list'ning shades, and teach the night his praise.
Ye chief, for whom the whole creation smiles!
At once the head, the heart, and tongue of all,
Crown the great hymn! in swarming cities vast,
Assembled men, to the deep organ join,
The long resounding voice, oft breaking clear,
At solemn pauses, thro' the swelling bass:
And as each mingling flame increases each,
In one united ardour rise to heav'n.
Or if you rather choose the rural shade,
And find a fane in every sacred grove;

There let the shepherd's flute, the virgin's lay,
The prompting seraph, and the poet's lyre,
Still sing the God of seasons as they roll.
For me, when I forget the darling theme,
Whether the blossom blows, the summer ray
Russets the plain, inspiring autumn gleams,
Or winter rises in the black'ning east;
Be my tongue mute, my fancy paint no more,
And, dead to joy, forget my heart to beat!
Should fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth, to distant barb'rous climes,
Rivers unknown to song, where first the sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on the Atlantic isles; 'tis nought to me,
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste, as in the city full;
And where he vital spreads, there must be joy.
When ev'n at last the solemn hour shall come
And wing my mystic flight to future worlds,
I cheerful will obey; there, with new pow'rs,
Will rising wonders sing: I cannot go
Where UNIVERSAL LOVE not smiles around,
Sustaining all yon orbs, and all their suns,
From seeming evil still educing good,
And better thence again, and better still,
In infinite progression.—But I lose
Myself in Him, in LIGHT INEFFABLE!
Come, then, expressive silence, muse His praise.

THE HERMIT.

Far in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age a reverend Hermit grew;
The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruits, his drink the crystal well:
Remote from man, with God he pass'd his days,
Prayer all his business, all his pleasure praise.

A life so sacred, such serene repose,
Seem'd Heaven itself, till one suggestion rose—
That vice should triumph, virtue vice obey;
This sprung some doubt of Providence's sway:
His hopes no more a certain prospect boast,
And all the tenour of his soul is lost.
So when a smooth expanse receives imprest
Calm nature's image on its watery breast,
Down bend the banks, the trees depending grow,
And skies beneath with answering colours glow;
But if a stone the gentle sea divide,
Swift rushing circles curl on every side,
And glimmering fragments of a broken sun:
Banks, trees, and skies, in thick disorder run.

To clear this doubt, to know the world by sight,
To find if books or swains report it right,
(For yet by swains alone the world he knew,
Whose feet came wandering o'er the nightly dew,)
He quits his cell: the pilgrim-staff he bore,
And fix'd the scallop in his hat before;
Then with the sun a rising journey went,
Sedate to think, and watching each event.

The morn was wasted in the pathless grass,
And long and lonesome was the wild to pass:
But when the southern sun had warm'd the day,
A youth came posting o'er a crossing way;
His raiment decent, his complexion fair,
And soft in graceful ringlets wav'd his hair;
Then near approaching, "Father, hail!" he cried;
And "Hail, my son!" the reverend sire replied.
Words follow'd words, from question answer flow'd,
And talk of various kind deceiv'd the road;
Till each with other pleas'd, and loth to part,
While in their age they differ, join in heart.
Thus stands an aged elm in ivy bound,
Thus youthful ivy clasps an elm around.

Now sunk the sun; the closing hour of day
Came onward, mantled o'er with sober gray;
Nature in silence bid the world repose;
When near the road a stately palace rose:
There, by the moon, through ranks of trees they pass,
Whose verdure crown'd their sloping sides of grass.
It chanc'd the noble master of the dome
Still made his house the wandering stranger's home;
Yet still the kindness, from a thirst of praise,
Prov'd the vain flourish of expensive ease.
The pair arrive: the liveried servants wait;
Their lord receives them at the pompous gate;
The table groans with costly piles of food,
And all is more than hospitably good.
Then led to rest, the day's long toil they drown,
Deep sunk in sleep, and silk, and heaps of down.
At length 'tis morn, and at the dawn of day

Along the wide canals the zephyrs play;
Fresh o'er the gay parterres the breezes creep,
And shake the neighbouring wood to banish sleep.
Up rise the guests, obedient to the call;
An early banquet deck'd the splendid hall;
Rich luscious wine a golden goblet grac'd,
Which the kind master forc'd the guests to taste.
Then, pleas'd and thankful, from the porch they go:
And, but the landlord, none had cause of wo:
His cup was vanish'd; for in secret guise
The younger guest purloin'd the glittering prize.

As one who spies a serpent in his way,
Glistening and basking in the summer ray,
Disorder'd stops to shun the danger near,
Then walks with faintness on, and looks with fear;
So seem'd the sire, when far upon the road
The shining spoil his wily partner show'd.
He stopp'd with silence, walk'd with trembling heart,
And much he wish'd, but durst not ask, to part;
Murmuring he lifts his eyes, and thinks it hard
That generous actions meet a base reward.

While thus they pass, the sun his glory shrouds,
The changing skies hang out their sable clouds;
A sound in air presag'd approaching rain,
And beasts to covert scud across the plain.
Warn'd by the signs, the wandering pair retreat
To seek for shelter at a neighbouring seat:
'Twas built with turrets on a rising ground,
And strong, and large, and unimprov'd around;
Its owner's temper, timorous and severe,
Unkind and griping, caus'd a desert there.

As near the miser's heavy doors they drew,
Fierce rising gusts with sudden fury blew;
The nimble lightning mix'd with showers began,
And o'er their heads loud rolling thunder ran.
Here, long they knock, but knock or call in vain,
Driv'n by the wind, and batter'd by the rain.
At length some pity warm'd the master's breast,
('Twas then his threshold first receiv'd a guest:)
Slow creaking turns the door with jealous care,
And half he welcomes in the shivering pair;
One frugal faggot lights the naked walls,
And nature's fervour through their limbs recalls:
Bread of the coarsest sort with meagre wine,
(Each hardly granted) serv'd them both to dine;
And when the tempest first appear'd to cease,
A ready warning bid them part in peace.

With still remark the pondering hermit view'd,
In one so rich, a life so poor and rude;
And why should such (within himself he cried)
Lock the lost wealth a thousand want beside?
But what new marks of wonder soon take place
In every setting feature of his face,
When from his vest the young companion bore
That cup the generous landlord own'd before,
And paid profusely with the precious bowl
The stinted kindness of this churlish soul!

But now the clouds in airy tumult fly;
The sun emerging opes an azure sky;
A fresher green the smelling leaves display,
And glittering as they tremble, cheer the day:
The weather courts them from the poor retreat,

And the glad master bolts the wary gate.
While hence they walk, the Pilgrim's bosom wrought
With all the travail of uncertain thought,
His partner's acts without their cause appear:
'Twas there a vice, and seem'd a madness here:
Detesting that, and pitying this, he goes,
Lost and confounded with the various shows.
Now night's dim shades again involve the sky,
Again the wanderers want a place to lie;
Again they search, and find a lodging nigh.
The soil improv'd around, the mansion neat,
And neither poorly low, nor idly great,
It seem'd to speak its master's turn of mind,
Content, and not for praise, but virtue kind.
Hither the walkers turn with weary feet,
Then bless the mansion, and the master greet.
Their greeting fair, bestow'd with modest guise,
The courteous master hears, and thus replies:
"Without a vain, without a grudging heart,
To him who gives us all, I yield a part;
From him you come, for him accept it here,
A frank and sober, more than costly cheer."
He spoke, and bid the welcome table spread,
Then talk'd of virtue till the time of bed;
When the grave household round his hall repair,
Warn'd by a bell, and close the hours with prayer.
At length the world, renew'd by calm repose,
Was strong for toil; the dappled morn arose;
Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept
Near the clos'd cradle, where an infant slept,
And writh'd his neck; the landlord's little pride,

O strange return! grew black, and gasp'd, and died.
Horror of horrors! what! his only son!
How look'd our Hermit when the fact was done!
Not hell, though hell's black jaws in sunder part,
And breathe blue fire, could more assault his heart.

Confus'd and struck with silence at the deed,
He flies; but, trembling, fails to fly with speed.
His steps the youth pursues; the country lay
Perplex'd with roads; a servant show'd the way:
A river cross'd the path; the passage o'er
Was nice to find; the servant trod before:
Long arms of oak an open bridge supplied,
And deep the waves beneath the bending branches glide.
The youth, who seems to watch a time to sin,
Approach'd the careless guide and thrust him in:
Plunging he falls, and rising lifts his head:
Then flashing turns, and sinks among the dead.

Wild sparkling rage inflames the father's eyes:
He bursts the bands of fear, and madly cries,
"Detested wretch!"—But scarce his speech began,
When the strange partner seem'd no longer man:
His youthful face grew more serenely sweet;
His robe turn'd white, and flow'd upon his feet;
Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair;
Celestial odours breathe through purpled air:
And wings, whose colours glitter'd on the day,
Wide at his back their gradual plumes display,
The form ethereal bursts upon his sight,
And moves in all the majesty of light.

Though loud at first the Pilgrim's passion grew,
Sudden he gaz'd, and wist not what to do;

Surprise in secret chains his words suspends,
And in a calm his settling temper ends.
But silence here the beauteous angel broke,
(The voice of music ravish'd as he spoke :)
" Thy prayer, thy praise, thy life to vice unknown,
In sweet memorials rise before the throne :
These charms success in our bright region find,
And force an angel down to calm thy mind ;
For this commission'd, I forsook the sky—
Nay, cease to kneel ! thy fellow-servant I.
" Then know the truth of government Divine,
And let these scruples be no longer thine.
" The Maker justly claims that world he made ;
In this the right of Providence is laid ;
Its sacred majesty through all depends
On using second means to work his ends ;
'Tis thus, withdrawn his state from human eye,
The Power exerts his attributes on high ;
Your actions uses, nor controls your will,
And bids the doubting sons of men be still.
" What strange events can strike with more surprise,
Than those which lately struck thy wondering eyes?
Yet taught by these, confess the Almighty just :
And, where you can't unriddle, learn to trust.
" The great, vain man, who far'd on costly food,
Whose life was too luxurious to be good ;
Who made his ivory stands with goblets shine,
And forc'd his guests to morning draught of wine ;
Has with the cup the graceless custom lost.
And still he welcomes, but with less of cost.
" The mean, suspicious wretch, whose bolted door

Ne'er mov'd in pity to the wandering poor,
With him I left the cup, to teach is mind
That Heaven can bless, if mortals will be kind.
Conscious of wanting worth, he views the bowl,
And feels compassion touch his grateful soul.
Thus artists melt the sullen ore of lead,
With heaping coals of fire upon its head;
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And, loose from dross, the silver runs below.

"Long had our pious friend in virtue trod,
But now the child half-wean'd his heart from God;
(Child of his age) for him he liv'd in pain,
And measur'd back his steps to earth again.
To what excesses had his dotage run!
But God to save the father, took the son.
To all but thee in fits he seem'd to go;
And 'twas my ministry to deal the blow.
The poor fand parent, humbled in the dust,
Now owns in tears the punishment was just.

"But how had all his fortunes felt a wreck,
Had that false servant sped in safety back!
This night his treasur'd heaps he meant to steal,
And what a fund of charity would fail!
Thus Heaven instructs thy mind: this trial o'er,
Depart in peace, resign, and sin no more."

On sounding pinions here the youth withdrew;
The sage stood wondering as the seraph flew.
Thus look'd Elisha, when to mount on high,
His master took the chariot of the sky:
The fiery pomp ascending left the view;
The prophet gaz'd, and wish'd to follow too.

The bending Hermit here a prayer begun :
Lord ! as in heaven, on earth thy will be done.
Then, gladly turning, sought his ancient place,
And pass'd a life of piety and peace.

THE

TRAVELLER,

OR, A

PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

REMOTE, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheld, or wand'ring Po;
Or onward, where the rude Corinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanding to the skies;
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart, untravell'd, fondly turns to thee;
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend:
Blest be that spot where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire:
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every Stranger finds a ready chair;
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good!

But me, not destin'd such delights to share,
My prime of life in wandering spent, and care;
Impell'd with steps unceasing, to pursue
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view;
That like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet as I follow, flies;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.
Ev'n now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend;
And, plac'd on high above the storm's career,
Look downward where an hundred realms appear;
Lakes, forests, cities, plains extending wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.

When thus Creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store, should thankless pride repine?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain?
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man;
And wiser he, whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
Ye glittering towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd,
Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round;
Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale;
Ye bending swains, that dress the flowery vale;
For me your tributary stores combine;
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine!

As some lone miser, visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er:

Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still:
Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
Pleas'd with each good that heaven to man supplies:
Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small;
And oft I wish, amidst the scene, to find
Some spot to real happiness consign'd,
Where my worn soul, each wandering hope at rest,
May gather bliss to see my fellows blest.

But where to find that happiest spot below,
Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
The shudd'ring tenant of the frigid zone
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own;
Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long nights of revelry and ease;
The naked negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine,
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,
His first, best country, ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind;
As different good by art or nature given,
To different nations makes their blessings even.

Nature, a Mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at labour's earnest call;

With food as well the peasant is supply'd
On Idra's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side:
And though the rocky crested summits frown,
These rocks, by custom, turn to beds of down.
From art more various are the blessings sent;
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content.
Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
That either seems destructive of the rest.
Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment fails.
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails,
Hence every state to one lov'd blessing prone,
Conforms and models life to that alone.
Each to the fav'rite happiness attends,
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends;
'Till carried to excess in each domain,
This fav'rite good begets peculiar pain.

But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies;
Here for a while my proper cares resign'd,
Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind;
Like yon neglected shrub at random cast,
That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast.

Far to the right where Apenine ascends,
Bright as the summer, *Italy* extends:
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride;
While oft some temple's mould'ring tops between
With venerable grandeur mark the scene.

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.

Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year:
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, they blossom but to die;
These here disporting own the kindred soil;
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil;
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.
In florid beauty groves and fields appear,
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign;
Though poor, luxurious; though submissive, vain;
Though grave, yet trifling; zealous, yet untrue;
And even in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind,
That opulence departed leaves behind;
For wealth was theirs, not far remov'd the date,
When commerce proudly flourish'd through the state:
At her command the palace learnt to rise,
Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies;
The canvass glow'd beyond e'en Nature warm;
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form.
Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail;
While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unmann'd, and lords without a slave.

And late the nation found with fruitless skill
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

Yet still the loss of wealth is here supplied
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride;
From these the feeble heart and long-fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen in bloodless pomp array'd,
The paste-board triumph and the cavalcade,
Processions form'd for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguil'd,
The sports of children satisfy the child:
Each nobler aim, repress by long control,
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul;
While low delights succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind;
As in those domes, where Cæsars once bore sway,
Defac'd by time and tott'ring in decay,
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed;
And, wondering man could want a larger pile,
Exults and owns his cottage with a smile.

My soul, turn from them, turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display,
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread;
No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword.
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter lingering chills the lap of May;

No zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.

Yet still, even here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feast tho' small,
He sees his little lot the lot of all;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head,
To shame the meanness of his humble shed;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal,
To make him loathe his vegetable meal;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting, fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn, he wakes from short repose,
Breathes the keen air, and carols as he goes:
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives the vent'rous ploughshare to the steep:
Or seeks the den where snow tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage into day.
At night returning, every labour sped,
He sits him down the monarch of a shed:
Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children's looks that brighten at the blaze;
While his lov'd partner, boastful of her hoard,
Displays her cleanly platter on the board:
And haply too some pilgrim thither led,
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart,
Imprints the patriot passion on his heart:
And e'en those ills, that round his mansion rise,
Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.

Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms;
And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.
Such are the charms to barren states assign'd;
Their wants but few, their wishes all confin'd.
Yet let them only share the praises due,
If few their wants, their pleasures are but few;
For every want that stimulates the breast,
Becomes a source of pleasure when redrest.
Whence from such lands each pleasing science flies,
The first excites desire, and then supplies:
Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy:
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame.
Their level life is but a mouldering fire,
Unquench'd by want, unfann'd by strong desire;
Unfit for raptures, or, if raptures cheer
On some high festival of once a year,
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow:
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low:
For, as refinement stops, from sire to son
Unalter'd, unimprov'd the manners run:
And love's and friendship's finely pointed dart
Fall blunted from each indurated heart.

Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
May sit, like falcons cowering on the nest;
But all the gentler morals, such as play
Thro' life's more cultur'd walks, and charm the way;
These, far dispers'd, on tim'rous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
I turn; and *France* displays her bright domain:
Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleas'd with thyself, whom all the world can please,
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire?
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshen'd from the wave the zephyr flew:
And haply, though my harsh touch falt'ring still,
But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill:
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance forgetful of the noon-tide hour.
Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze,
And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burthen of threescore.

So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly busy rolls their world away;
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honour forms the social temper here.
Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or even imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current, paid from hand to hand,
It shifts its splendid traffic round the land:

From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise;
They please, are pleased, they give to get esteem,
Till seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise;
For praise too dearly lov'd, or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought:
And the weak soul within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.
Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart;
Here vanity assumes her pert grimace,
And trims her robes of frize with copper lace;
Here beggar pride defrauds her daily cheer,
To boast one splendid banquet once a year;
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
Nor weighs the solid worth of self applause.

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom'd in the deep where *Holland* lies.
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land;
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onward methinks, and diligently slow,
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow;
Spreads its long arms amidst the watery roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore.
While the pent ocean rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile;

The slow canal, the yellow blossom'd vale,
The willow tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescu'd from his reign.

Thus while around the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,
Are here display'd. Their much-lov'd wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts;
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear,
Even liberty itself is barter'd here.
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies,
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys;
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Her wretches seek dishonourable graves,
And calmly bent to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that slumber in the storm.

Heavens! how unlike their Belgic sires of old!
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold:
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow;
How much unlike the sons of Britain now!

Fir'd at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
And flies where *Britain* courts the western spring;
Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than fam'd Hydaspus glide,
There all around the gentlest breezes stray,
There gentle music melts on every spray;

Creation's mildest charms are there combin'd,
Extremes are only on the master's mind!
Stern o'er each bosom reason holds her state
With daring aims irregularly great;
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by;
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
By forms unfashion'd fresh from nature's hand,
Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,
True to imagin'd right, above control,
While even the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man.

Thine, freedom, thine the blessings pictur'd here,
Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear:
Too blest indeed, were such without alloy,
But foster'd e'en by freedom, ills annoy;
That independence Britons prize too high,
Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie;
The self-dependent lordlings, stand alone,
All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown;
Here by the bonds of nature feebly held,
Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd.
Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar,
Represt ambition struggles round her shore,
Till over-wrought, the general system feels
Its motion stop, or frenzy fire the wheels.

Nor this the worst. As nature's ties decay,
As duty, love, and honour fail to sway,
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.

Hence all obedience bows to thee alone,
And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown:
Till time may come, when, stript of all her charms,
The land of scholars, and the nurse of arms,
Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,
Where kings have toil'd, and poets wrote for fame
One sink of level avarice shall lie,
And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonour'd die.

Yet think not, thus when Freedom's ills I state,
I mean to flatter kings, or court the great;
Ye powers of truth, that bid my soul aspire,
Far from my bosom drive the low desire;
And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel
The rabble's rage and tyrant's angry steel;
Thou transitory flower, alike undone
By proud contempt, or favour's fostering sun,
Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure,
I only would repress them to secure;
For just experience tells, in every soil,
That those that think must govern those that toil;
And all that freedom's highest aims can reach,
Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each.
Hence, should one order disproportion'd grow,
Its double weight must ruin all below.

O then how blind to all that truth requires,
Who think it freedom when a part aspires!
Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise in arms,
Except when fast approaching danger warms;
But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
Contracting regal power, to stretch their own,

When I beheld a factious band agree
To call it freedom when themselves are free;
Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw,
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law:
The wealth of climes, where savage nations roam,
Pillag'd from slaves to purchase slaves at home;
Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
Tear off reserve, and bear my swelling heart;
Till half a patriot, half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.

Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour,
When first ambition struck at regal power;
And thus polluting honour in its source,
Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force.
Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
Her useful sons exchang'd for useless ore?
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,
Like flaring tapers bright'ning as they waste:
Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
Lead stern depopulation in her train,
And over fields where scatter'd hamlets rose,
In barren solitary pomp repose?
Have we not seen at pleasure's lordly call,
The smiling long-frequented village fall?
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forc'd from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main;
Where wild Oswego spreads her charms around,
And Niagara stuns the thund'ring sound?

Even now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Through tangled forests, and through dangerous ways;
Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murd'rous aim
There, while above the giddy tempest flies,
And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile, bending with his wo,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,
Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathize with mine.

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
That bliss which only centres in the mind:
Why have I stray'd from pleasure and repose,
To seek a good each government bestows?
In every government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings, or tyrant laws restrain,
How small of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.
Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
Our own felicity we make or find:
With secret course, will no loud storms annoy
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
The lifted ax, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damein's bed of steel,
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Love, reason, faith, and conscience, all our own.

The Hermit.

At the close of the day when the hamlet is still,
And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove;
When nought but the torrent is heard on the hill,
And nought but the nightingale's song in the grove;
'Twas thus by the cave of a mountain afar,
While his harp rung symphonious, a hermit began;
No more with himself or with nature at war,
He thought as a sage, though he felt as a man.

2. "Ah! why, all abandon'd to darkness and wo;
Why, lone Philomela, that languishing fall?
For spring shall return, and a lover bestow,
And sorrow no longer thy bosom inthral.
But if pity inspire thee, renew the sad lay,
Mourn, sweetest complainer, man calls thee to mourn;
O sooth him whose pleasures like thine pass away;
Full quickly they pass—but they never return.

3. "Now gliding remote, on the verge of the sky,
The moon half extinguish'd her crescent displays:
But lately I mark'd, when majestic on high
She shone, and the planets were lost in the blaze.
Roll on, thou fair orb, and with gladness pursue
The path that conducts thee to splendour again:
But man's faded glory what change shall renew?
Ah fool! to exult in a glory so vain!

4. "'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more;
I mourn; but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you;
For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,
Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glitt'ring with dew.
Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn;
Kind nature the embryo blossom will save:
But when shall spring visit the mouldering urn!
O when shall day dawn on the night of the grave!

5. "'Twas thus by the glare of false science betray'd,
That leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind;
My thoughts wont to roam, from shade onward to shade,
Destruction before me, and sorrow behind.
O pity, great Father of light, then I cry'd,
Thy creature who fain would not wander from thee!
Lo, humbled in dust, I relinquish my pride;
From doubt and from darkness thou only canst free.

6. "And darkness and doubt are now flying away;
No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn:
So breaks on the traveller, faint and astray,
The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.
See truth, love, and mercy, in triumph descending,
And nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom!
On the cold cheek of death smiles and roses are blending,
And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb."

Boat Song.

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances,
Honoured and blessed by the ever-green pine!
Long may the tree in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to glow,
While every Highland glen,
Sends our shout back agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan Alpine exult in her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow
Menteith and Bredalbane, then,
Echo his praise agen,
"Roderigh Vic Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Banochar's groans to our slogan replied,
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side.
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with wo;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars, for the ever green pine!
O! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honoured and blessed in their shadow might grow!
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepest glen,
'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

THE

CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

The castle hight of indolence
And its false luxury;
Where for a little time, alas!
We liv'd right jollily.

I.

O MORTAL MAN, who livest here by toil!
Do not complain of this thy hard estate;
That like an emmet thou must ever moil,
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date;
And, certes, there is for it reason great;
For, tho' sometimes it makes thee weep and wail,
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late,
Withouten that would come an heavier bale,
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

II.

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,
With woody hill o'er hill encompass'd round,
A most enchanting wizard did abide,
Than whom a fiend more fell is no where found.
It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground;

And there a season atween *June* and *May*,
Half prankt with spring, with summer half imbrown'd,
A listless climate made where, sooth to say,
No living wight could work, nor cared even for play.

III.

Was nought around but images of rest:
Sleep soothing groves, and quiet lawns between;
And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest,
From poppies breath'd; and beds of pleasant green,
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Meantime unnumber'd glittering streamlets play'd,
And hurled every where their waters sheen;
That, as they bicker'd through the sunny glade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

IV.

Join'd to the prattle of the purling rills,
Were heard the lowing herds along the vale,
And flocks loud bleating from the distant hills,
And vacant shepherds piping in the dale:
And now and then sweet Philomel would wail,
Or stock-doves plain amid the forest deep,
That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale;
And still a coil the grasshopper did keep;
Yet all these sounds yblent inclined all to sleep.

V.

Full in the passage of the vale above;
A sable, silent, solemn forest stood;
Where nought but shadowy forms were seen to move,
As *Idless* fancied in her dreaming mood:

And up the hills, on either side, a wood
Of blackening pines, aye waving to and fro,
Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood;
And where this valley winded out below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard to flow.

VI.

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer sky:
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly
Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures always hover'd nigh;
But whate'er smack'd of noyance, or unrest,
Was far, far off expell'd from this delicious nest.

VII.

The landscape such, inspiring perfect ease,
Where *Indolence*, (for so the wizard hight)
Close hid his castle mid embowering trees,
That half shut out the beams of Phœbus bright,
And made a kind of checker'd day and night;
Meanwhile, unceasing at the massy gate
Beneath a spacious palm, the wicked wight
Was plac'd; and to his lute, of cruel fate,
And labour harsh, complain'd, lamenting man's estate.

VIII.

Thither continual pilgrims crowded still,
From all the roads of earth that pass thereby;
For as they chanc'd to breathe on neighb'ring hill,
The freshness of this valley smote their eye,

And drew them ever and anon more nigh;
'Till clustering round th' enchanter false they hung,
Ymolten with his syren melody;
While o'er th' enfeebled lute his hand he flung,
And to the trembling chords these tempting verses sung.

IX.

"Behold! ye pilgrims of this earth, behold!
"See all but man with unearn'd pleasure gay;
"See her bright robes the butterfly unfold,
"Broke from her wintry tomb in prime of *May!*
"What youthful bride can equal her array?
"Who can with her for easy pleasure vie?
"From mead to mead with gentle wing to stray,
"From flower to flower on balmy gales to fly,
"Is all she has to do beneath the radiant sky.

X.

"Behold the merry minstrels of the morn,
"The swarming songsters of the careless grove,
"Ten thousand throats! that, from the flowering thorn,
"Hymn their good God, and carol sweet of love,
"Such grateful kindly raptures them emove:
"They neither plough, nor sow; nor, fit for flail,
"E'er to the barn the nodden sheaves they drove;
"Yet theirs each harvest dancing in the gale,
"Whatever crowns the hill, or smiles along the vale.

XI.

"Outcast of nature, man! the wretched thrall
"Of bitter-drooping sweat, of sweltry pain,

"Of cares that eat away the heart with gall,
"And of the vices, an inhuman train,
"That all proceed from savage thirst of gain:
"For when hard-hearted *Interest* first began
"To poison earth, *Astræa* left the plain!
"Guile, violence, and murder seiz'd on man,
"And, for soft milky streams, with blood the rivers ran.

XII.

"Come, ye, who still the cumb'rous load of life
"Push hard up hill; but as the farthest steep
"You trust to gain, and put an end to strife,
"Down thunders back the stone, with mighty sweep,
"And hurls your labours to the valley deep,
"For ever vain: come, and withouten fee,
"I in oblivion will your sorrows steep,
"Your cares, your toils, will steep you in a sea
"Of full delight: O, come, ye weary wights, to me!

XIII.

"With me, you need not rise at early dawn,
"To pass the joyless day in various stounds;
"Or, louting low, on upstart fortune fawn,
"And sell fair honour for some paltry pounds;
"Or through the city take your dirty rounds,
"To cheat, and dun, and lie, and visit pay,
"Now flattering base, now giving secret wounds;
"Or prowl in courts of law for human prey,
"In venal senate thieve, or rob on broad highway.

XIV.

" No cocks, with me, to rustic labour call,
" From village on to village sounding clear :
" No tardy swain, no shrill-voic'd matrons squall :
" No dogs, no babes, no wives to stun your ear ;
" No hammers thump ; no horrid blacksmith fear ;
" No noisy tradesmen your sweet slumbers start,
" With sounds that are a misery to hear :
" But all is calm, as would delight the heart
" Of *Sybarite* of old, all nature, and all art.

XV.

" Here nought but candour reigns, indulgent ease,
" Good natur'd lounging, sauntering up and down :
" They who are pleas'd themselves must always please ;
" On others' ways they never squint a frown,
" Nor heed what haps in hamlet or in town :
" Thus, from the source of tender indolence,
" With milky blood the heart is overflown,
" Is sooth'd and sweeten'd by the social sense :
" For interest, envy, pride, and strife are banish'd hence.

XVI.

" What, what is virtue, but repose of mind,
" A pure etherial calm, that knows no storm ;
" Above the reach of wild ambition's wind,
" Above those passions that this world deform,
" And torture man, a proud malignant worm?
" But here, instead, soft gales of passions play,
" And gently stir the heart, thereby to form
" A quicker sense of joy : as breezes stray
" Across th' enliven'd skies, and make them still more gay.

XVII.

" The best of men have ever lov'd repose:
" They hate to mingle in the filthy fray;
" Where the soul sours, and gradual rancour grows,
" Imbitter'd more from peevish day to day.
" Even those whom fame has lent her fairest ray,
" The most renown'd of worthy wights of yore,
" From a base world at last have stol'n away:
" So *Scipio*, to the soft *Cumæan* shore
" Retiring, tasted joys he never knew before.

XVIII.

" But if a little exercise you choose,
" Some zest for ease, 'tis not forbidden here.
" Amid the groves you may indulge the muse,
" Or tend the blooms, and deck the vernal year;
" Or softly stealing with your watery gear,
" Along the brooks, the crimson-spotted fry
" You may delude: the whilst, amus'd you hear
" Now the hoarse stream, and now the zephyr's sigh
" Attun'd to the birds, and woodland melody.

XIX.

" O grievous folly! to heap up estate,
" Losing the days you see beneath the sun;
" When, sudden, comes blind unrelenting fate,
" And gives th' untasted portion you have won,
" With ruthless toil, and many a wretch undone,
" To those who mock you gone to *Pluto's* reign,
" There with sad ghosts to pine, and shadows dun:
" But sure it is of vanities most vain,
" To toil for what you here untoiling may obtain."

XX.

He ceas'd : But still their trembling ears retain'd
The deep vibrations of his witching song :
That by a kind of magic power, constrain'd
To enter in, pell-mell, the listening throng.
Heaps pour'd on heaps, and yet they slipt along,
In silent ease : as when beneath the beam
Of summer-moons, the distant woods among,
Or by some flood all silver'd with the gleam,
The soft embodied Fays through airy portals stream.

XXI.

By the smooth demon so it order'd was,
And here his baneful bounty first began ;
Though some there were who would not further pass,
And his alluring baits suspected han,
The wise distrust, the too fair-spoken man,
Yet through the gate they cast a wishful eye :
Not to move on, perdie, is all they can ;
For do their very best they cannot fly,
But often each way look, and often sorely sigh.

XXII.

When this the watchful wicked wizard saw,
With sudden spring he leap'd upon them straight ;
And soon as touch'd by his unhallow'd paw,
They found themselves within the cursed gate ;
Full hard to be repass'd, like that of fate.
Not stronger were of old the giant-crew,
Who sought to pull high *Jove* from regal state ;
Though feeble wretch he seem'd, of sallow hue
Certes, who bides his grasp, will that encounter rue.

XXIII.

For whomsoe'er the villain takes in hand,
Their joints unknit, their sinews melt apace;
As lithe they grow as any willow-wand,
And of their vanish'd force remains no trace;
So when a maiden fair of modest grace,
In all her buxom blooming *May* of charms,
Is seized in some losel's hot embrace,
She waxeth very weakly as she warms,
Then sighing yields her up to love's delicious harms.

XXIV.

Wak'd by the crowd, slow from his bench arose,
A comely full-spread porter, swoln with sleep:
His calm, broad, thoughtless aspect breath'd repose;
And in sweet torpor he was plunged deep.
He could himself from ceaseless yawning keep:
While o'er his eyes the drowsy liquor ran,
Through which his half-wak'd soul would faintly peep,
Then, taking his black staff, he call'd his man,
And rous'd himself as much as rouse himself he can.

XXV.

The lad leap'd lightly at his master's call:
He was, to weet, a little roguish page,
Save sleep and play who minded nought at all,
Like most the untaught striplings of his age.
This boy he kept each band to disengage,
Garters and buckles, task for him unfit,
But ill-becoming his grave personage,
And which his portly paunch would not permit,
So this same limber page to all performed it.

XXVI.

Mean time the master-porter wide display'd
Great store of caps, of slippers, and of gowns;
Wherewith he those who enter'd in, array'd
Loose, as the breeze that plays along the downs,
And waves the summer-woods when evening frowns.
O fair undress, best dress! it checks no vein,
But every flowing limb in pleasure drowns,
And heightens ease with grace. This done, right fain,
Sir porter set him down, and turn'd to sleep again.

XXVII.

Thus easy rob'd, they to the fountain sped,
That in the middle of the court upthrew
A stream, high-spouting from its liquid bed,
And falling back again in drizzly dew:
There each deep draughts, as deep he thirsted, drew,
It was a fountain of *Nepenthe* rare:
Whence, as Dan *Homer* sings, huge pleasaunce grew,
And sweet oblivion of vile earthly care; [fair.
Fair gladsome waking thoughts, and joyous dreams more

XXVIII.

This rite perform'd, all inly pleas'd and still,
Withouten trump was proclamation made:
"Ye sons of *Indolence*, do what you will:
"And wander where you list, thro' hall or glade!
"Be no man's pleasure for another staid:
"Let each as likes him best his hours employ,
"And curs'd be he who minds his neighbour's trade!
"Here dwells kind ease and unreproving joy:
"He little merits bliss who others can annoy."

XXIX.

Straight of these endless numbers, swarming round,
As thick as idle motes in sunny ray,
Not one eftsoons in view was to be found,
But every man stroll'd off his own glad way.
Wide o'er this ample court's blank area,
With all the lodges that thereto pertain'd,
No living creature could be seen to stray:
While solitude, and perfect silence reign'd;
So that to think you dreamt you almost was constrain'd.

XXX.

As when a shepherd of the *Hebrid Isles*,†
Plac'd far amid the melancholy main,
(Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles;
Or that aerial beings sometimes deign
To stand, embodied, to our senses plain,)
Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
The whilst in ocean *Phœbus* dips his wain,
A vast assembly moving to and fro:
Then all at once in air dissolves the wondrous show.

XXXI.

Ye gods of quiet and of sleep profound!
Whose soft dominion o'er this castle sways,
And all the widely-silent places round,
Forgive me, if my trembling pen displays
What never yet was sung in mortal lays.
But how shall I attempt such arduous string,
I who have spent my nights and nightly days,
In this soul-deadening place, loose loitering?
Ah! how shall I for this uprear my moulted wing?

† Those islands on the western coast of Scotland, called the Hebrides.

XXXII.

Come on, my Muse, nor stoop to low despair,
Thou imp of *Jove;* touch'd by celestial fire
Which yet shall sing of war, and actions fair,
Which the bold sons of *Britain* will inspire;
Of ancient bards thou yet shalt sweep the lyre;
Thou yet shat tread in tragic pall the stage,
Paint love's enchanting woes, the hero's ire,
The sage's calm, the patriot's noble rage,
Dashing corruption down through every worthless age.

XXXIII.

The doors, that knew no shrill alarming bell,
No cursed knocker ply'd by villain's hand,
Self-open'd into halls, where, who can tell
What elegance and grandeur wide expand
The pride of *Turkey* and of *Persia* land?
Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread,
And couches stretch'd around in seemly band;
And endless pillows rise to prop the head;
So that each spacious room was one full swelling bed.

XXXIV.

And every where huge cover'd tables stood,
With wines high-flavour'd and rich viands crown'd;
Whatever sprightly juice or tasteful food
On the green bosom of this earth are found,
And all old ocean genders in his round:
Some hand unseen these silently display'd,
Even undemanded by a sign or sound;
You need but wish, and, instantly obey'd,
Fair-rang'd the dishes rose, and thick the glasses play'd.

XXXV

Here freedom reign'd, without the least alloy:
Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
Nor saintly spleen durst murmur at our joy,
And with envenom'd tongue our pleasures pall.
For why? there was but one great rule for all;
To wit, that each should work his own desire,
And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
And carol what, unbid, the Muses might inspire.

XXXVI.

The rooms with costly tapestry were hung,
Where was inwoven many a gentle gale:
Such as of old the rural poets sung,
Or of *Arcadian* or *Sicilian* vale:
Reclining lovers, in the lonely dale,
Pour'd forth at large the sweetly-tortur'd heart;
Or, sighing tender passions, swell'd the gale,
And taught charm'd echo to resound their smart;
While flocks, woods, streams, around, repose and peace impart.

XXXVII.

Those pleas'd the most, where, by a cunning hand,
Depainted was the patriarchal age,
What time Dan *Abraham* left the *Chaldee* land,
And pastur'd on from verdant stage to stage,
Where fields and fountains fresh could best engage,
Toil was not then. Of nothing took they heed,
But with wild beasts the sylvan war to wage,
And o'er vast plains their herds and flocks to feed:
Blest sons of nature they! true golden age indeed!

XXXVIII.

Sometimes the pencil, in cool airy halls,
Bade the gay bloom of vernal landscapes rise,
Or autumn's varied shades imbrown the walls:
Now the black tempest strikes th' astonish'd eyes;
Now down the steep the flashing torrent flies;
The trembling sun now plays o'er ocean blue,
And now rude mountains frown amid the skies:
Whate'er *Lorrain* light-touch'd with softening hue,
Or savage *Rosa* dash'd, or learned *Poussin* drew.

XXXIX.

Each sound too here to languishment inclin'd,
Lull'd the weak bosom, and induced ease.
Aerial music in the warbling wind,
At distance rising oft, by small degrees,
Nearer and nearer came, till o'er the trees
It hung, and breath'd such soul-dissolving airs,
As did, alas! with soft perdition please:
Entangled deep in its enchanting snares,
The listening heart forgot all duties and all cares.

XL.

A certain music, never known before,
Here lull'd the pensive melancholy mind
Full easily obtain'd. Behooves no more,
But sidelong, to the gently-waving wind,
To lay the well-tun'd instrument reclin'd:
From which, with airy flying fingers light,
Beyond each mortal touch the most refin'd,

The god of winds drew sounds of deep delight;
Whence, with just cause, *The Harp of Æolus** it hight.

XLI.

Ah me! what hand can touch the string so fine?
Who up the lofty Diapasan roll
Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
Then let them down again into the soul?
Now rising love they fann'd; now pleasing dole
They breath'd in tender musings, through the heart;
And now a graver sacred strain they stole,
As when seraphic hands an hymn impart:
Wild-warbling nature all, above the reach of art!

XLII.

Such the gay splendour, the luxurious state,
Of *Caliphs* old, who on the *Tigris*' shore,
In mighty *Bagdat*, populous and great,
Held their bright court, where was of ladies store;
And verse, love, music still the garland wore:
When sleep was coy, the bard†, in waiting there,
Cheer'd the lone midnight with the Muse's lore;
Composing music bade his dreams be fair,
And music lent new gladness to the morning air.

XLIII.

Near the pavilions where we slept, still ran
Soft tinkling streams, and dashing waters fell,

* This is not an imagination of the author; there being, in fact, such an instrument, called Æolus's Harp, which, when placed against a little rushing or current of air, produces the effect here described.

† The Arabian Caliphs had poets among the officers of their court, whose office it was to do what is here mentioned.

And sobbing breezes sigh'd, and oft began
(So work'd the wizard) wintry storms to swell,
As heaven and earth they would together mell;
At doors and windows, threatening, seem'd to call
The demons of the tempest, growing fell,
Yet the least entrance found they none at all;
Whence sweeter grew our sleep, secure in massy hall

XLIV.

And hither *Morpheus* sent his kindest dreams,
Raising a world of gayer tinct and grace;
O'er which were shadowy cast elysian gleams,
That play'd, in waving lights, from place to place,
And shed a roseate smile on nature's face.
Not *Titian's* pencil e'er could so array,
So fleece with clouds the pure ethereal space;
Ne could it e'er such melting forms display,
As loose on flowery beds all languishingly lay.

XLV.

No, fair allusions! artful phantoms, no!
My Muse will not attempt your fairy-land:
She has no colours that like you can glow:
To catch your vivid scenes too gross her hand.
But sure it is, was ne'er a subtler band
Than these same guileful angel-seeming sprights,
Who thus in dreams, voluptuous, soft, and bland,
Pour'd all th' *Arabian Heaven* upon our nights,
And bless'd them oft besides with more refin'd delights

XLVI.

They were in sooth a most enchanting train,
Even feigning virtue; skilful to unite
With evil good, and strew with pleasure pain.
But for those fiends, whom blood and broils delight;
Who hurl the wretch, as if to hell outright,
Down, down black gulfs where sullen waters sleep,
Or hold him clambering all the fearful night
On beetling cliffs, or pent in ruins deep:
They, till due time should serve, we bid far hence to keep.

XLVII.

Ye guardian spirits, to whom man is dear,
From these foul demons shield the midnight gloom:
Angels of fancy and of love, be near,
And o'er the blank of sleep diffuse a bloom:
Evoke the sacred shades of *Greece* and *Rome*,
And let them virtue with a look impart:
But chief, a while, O! lend us from the tomb
Those long-lost friends for whom in love we smart,
And fill with pious awe and joy-mixt wo the heart.

XLVIII.

Or are you sportive—Bid the morn of youth
Rise to new light, and beam afresh the days
Of innocence, simplicity, and truth;
To cares estrang'd and manhood's thorny ways.
What transport, to retrace our boyish plays,
Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supplied;
The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze
Of the wild brooks!—But fondly wandering wide,
My Muse, resume the task that yet doth thee abide.

XLIX.

One great amusement of our household was,
In a huge crystal magic globe to spy,
Still as you turn'd it, all things that do pass
Upon this ant-hill earth; where constantly
Of idly-busy men the restless fry
Run bustling to and fro with foolish haste,
In search of pleasures vain that from them fly,
Or which obtain'd the caitiffs dare not taste:
When nothing is enjoy'd, can there be greater waste?

L.

Of vanity the mirror this was call'd.
Here you a muckworm of the town might see,
At his dull desk, amid his legers stall'd,
Eat up with carking care and penury;
Most like to carcass parch'd on gallows-tree.
A penny saved is a penny got:
Firm to this scoundrel maxim keepeth he,
Ne of its rigour will he bate a jot,
Till it has quench'd his fire and banished his pot.

LI.

Strait from the filth of this low grub, behold!
Comes fluttering forth a gaudy spendthrift heir,
All glossy gay, enamell'd all with gold,
The silly tenant of the summer-air,
In folly lost, of nothing takes he care;
Pimps, lawyers, stewards, harlots, flatterers vile
And thieving tradesmen him among them share:
His Father's ghost from limbo-lake, the while
Sees this, which more damnation doth upon him pile.

LII.

This globe portray'd the race of learned men,
Still at their books, and turning o'er the page,
Backwards and forwards: oft they snatch the pen
As if inspir'd, and in a *Thespian* rage:
Then write, and blot, as would your ruth engage:
Why, Authors, all this scrawl and scribbling sore?
To lose the present, gain the future age,
Prais'd to be when you can hear no more,
And much enrich'd with fame when useless worldly store.

LIII.

Then would a splendid city rise to view,
With carts, and car, and coaches roaring all:
Wide-pour'd abroad behold the giddy crew;
See how they dash along from wall to wall!
At every door, hark how they thundering call!
Good Lord! what can this giddy route excite?
Why on each other with fell tooth to fall;
A neighbour's fortune, fame, or peace to blight,
And make new tiresome parties for the coming night.

LIV

The puzzling sons of party next appear'd
In dark cabals and nightly juntos met;
And now they whisper'd close, now shrugging rear'd
Th' important shoulder; then, as if to get
New light, their twinkling eyes were inward set.
No sooner *Lucifer*† recalls affairs,
Than forth they various rush in mighty fret;

† The morning star.

When lo! push'd up to pow'r, and crown'd their care,
In comes another set and kicketh them down stairs.

LV.

But what most show'd the vanity of life,
Was to behold the nations all on fire,
In cruel broils engag'd, and deadly strife;
Most christian kings, inflam'd by black desire,
With honourable ruffians in their hire.
Cause war to rage, and blood around to pour:
Of this sad work when each begins to tire,
Then set them down just where they were before,
Till for new scenes of wo peace shall their force restore.

LVI.

To number up the thousands dwelling here,
And useless were, and eke an endless task;
From kings, and those who at the helm appear,
To gipsies brown, in summer-glades who bask.
Yea, many a man perdie I could unmask,
Whose desk and table make a solemn show,
With tape-tied trash, and suits of fools that ask
For place or pension laid in decent row;
But these I passen by, with nameless numbers more.

LVII.

Of all the gentle tenants of the place,
There was a man of special grave remark:
A certain tender gloom o'erspread his face,
Pensive, not sad; in thought involv'd, not dark;
As soot this man could sing as morning lark,
And teach the noblest morals of the heart:

But these his talents were yburied stark;
Of the fine stores he nothing would impart,
Which boon or nature gave, or nature-painting art.

LVIII.

To noontide shades incontinent he ran,
Where purls the brook with sleep inviting sound;
Or when Dan *Sol* to slope his wheels began,
Amid the broom he bask'd him on the ground,
Where the wild thyme and chamomile are found;
There would he linger, till the latest ray
Of light sat trembling on the welkin's bound;
Then homeward through the twilight shadows stray
Sauntering and slow. So had he passed many a day.

LIX.

Yet not in thoughtless slumber were they past;
For oft the heavenly fire that lay conceal'd
Beneath the sleeping embers, mounted fast,
And all its native light anew reveal'd:
Oft as he travers'd the cerulean field,
And markt the clouds that drove before the wind,
Ten thousand glorious systems would he build,
Ten thousand great ideas fill'd his mind;
But with the clouds they fled, and left no trace behind.

LX.

With him was sometimes join'd, in silent walk,
(Profoundly silent, for they never spoke)
One shyer still, who quite detested talk:
Oft stung by spleen, at once away he broke,
To groves of pine, and broad o'ershading oak;

There, inly thrill'd, he wander'd all alone,
And on himself his pensive fury wroke,
Ne ever utter'd word save when first shone [done."
The glittering star of eve—"Thank heaven! the day is

LXI.

Here lurk'd a wretch who had not crept abroad
For forty years, ne face of mortal seen;
In chamber brooding like a loathly toad:
And sure his linen was not very clean.
Through secret loop-holes that had practis'd been,
Near to his bed, his dinner vile he took;
Unkempt and rough, of squalid face and mien,
Our castle's shame! whence, from his filthy nook,
We drove the villain out for fitter lair to look.

LXII.

One day there chanc'd into these halls to rove
A joyous youth, who took you at first sight;
Him the wild wave of pleasure hither drove,
Before the sprightly tempest tossing light;
Certes he was a most engaging wight,
Of social glee, and wit humane though keen,
Turning night to day, and day to night:
For him the merry bells had rung, I ween,
If in this nook of quiet bells had ever been.

LXIII.

But not even pleasure to excess is good:
What most elates then sinks the soul as low;
When springtide joy pours in with copious flood,
The higher still the exulting billows flow,

The farther back again they flagging go,
And leave us grovelling on the dreary shore:
Taught by this son of joy, we found it so:
Who, whilst he staid, he kept in gay uproar
Our madden'd castle all, the abode of sleep no more.

LXIV.

As when in prime of *June* a burnish'd fly,
Sprung from the meads, o'er which he sweeps along,
Cheer'd by the breathing bloom and vital sky,
Tunes up amid these airy halls his song.
Soothing at first the gay reposing throng:
And oft he sips their bowl; or, nearly drown'd,
He thence recovering, drives their beds among,
And scares their tender sleep, with trump profound:
Then out again he flies to wing his mazy round.

LXV.

Another guest there was, of sense refin'd,
Who felt each worth, for every worth he had:
Serene, yet warm; humane, yet firm his mind,
As little touch'd as any man's with bad;
Him through their inmost walks the Muses led,
To him the sacred love of nature lent,
And sometimes would he make our valley glad;
When as we found he would not here be pent,
To him the better sort this friendly message sent.

LXVI.

"Come, dwell with us, true son of virtue, come!
"But if, alas! we cannot thee persuade

" To lie content beneath our peaceful dome,
" Ne ever more to quit our quiet glade:
" Yet when at last thy toils, but ill apaid,
" Shall dead thy fire, and damp its heavenly spark,
" Thou wilt be glad to seek the rural shade,
" There to indulge the Muse, and Nature mark;
" We then a lodge for thee will rear in *Hagley Park.*"

LXVII.

Here whilom ligg'd the *Esopus*† of the age.
But call'd by fame, in soul ypricked deep,
A noble pride restored him to the stage,
And rous'd him like a giant from his sleep.
Even from his slumbers we advantage reap:
With double force th' enliven'd scene he wakes,
Yet quits not nature's bounds. He knows to keep
Each due decorum: Now the heart he shakes, [takes.
And now with well urg'd sense the enlighten'd judgment

LXVIII.

A bard here dwelt, more fat than bard beseems;
‡Who, void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,
On virtue still, and nature's pleasing themes,
Pour'd forth his unpremeditated strain:
The world forsaking with a calm disdain,
Here laugh'd he careless in his easy seat;
Here quaff'd, encircled with the joyous train,
Oft moralizing sage: his ditty sweet
He loathed much to write, ne cared to repeat.

† Mr. Quin.
‡ The following lines of this stanza were written by a friend of the author.

LXIX.

Full oft by holy feet our ground was trod,
Of clerks good plenty here you mote espy.
A little, round, fat, oily man of God,
Was one I chiefly mark'd among the fry:
He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,
And shone all glittering with ungodly dew,
If a tight damsel chaunc'd to trippen by;
Which, when observ'd, he shrunk into his mew,
And straight would recollect his piety anew.

LXX.

Nor be forgot a tribe who minded naught
(Old inmates of the place) but state affairs:
They look'd, perdie, as if they deeply thought;
And on their brow sat every nation's cares.
The world by them is parcell'd out in shares,
When in the *Hall of Smoke* they congress hold,
And the sage berry, sun-burnt *Mocha* bears,
Has clear'd their inward eye; then, smoke enroll'd,
Their oracles break forth mysterious as of old.

LXXI.

Here languid beauty kept her pale-fac'd court;
Bevies of dainty dames, of high degree,
From every quarter hither may resort;
Where, from gross mortal care and business free,
They lay pour'd out in ease and luxury.
Or should they a vain show of work assume,
Alas! and well-a-day! what can it be?

To knot, to twist, to range the vernal bloom;
But far is cast the distaff, spinning wheel, and loom.

LXXII.

Their only labour was to kill the time;
And labour dire it is, and weary wo,
They sit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhyme;
Then, rising sudden, to the glass they go,
Or saunter forth, with tottering step and slow:
This soon too rude an exercise they find;
Straight on their couch their limbs again they throw
Where hours on hours they sighing lie reclin'd,
And court the vapoury god soft breathing in the wind.

LXXIII.

Now must I mark the villany we found,
But ah! too late, as shall eftsoons be shown:
A place here was, deep, dreary, under ground;
Where still our inmates, when unpleasing grown,
Diseas'd, and loathsome, privily were thrown.
Far from the light of heaven, they languish'd there,
Unpitied, uttering many a bitter groan:
For of these wretches taken was no care:
Fierce fiends, and hags of hell, their only nurses were.

LXXIV.

Alas! the change! from scenes of joy and rest,
To this dark den, where sickness toss'd alway,
Here *Lethargy*, with deadly sleep opprest,
Stretch'd on his back, a mighty lubbard, lay,
Heaving his sides, and snored night and day;
To stir him from his traunce it was not eath.

And his half open'd eyne he shut straightway:
He led, I wot, the softest way to death,
And taught withouten pain and strife to yield the breath.

LXXV.

Of limbs enormous, but withal unsound,
Soft-swoln and pale, here lay the *Hydropsy*:
Unwieldy man; with belly monstrous round,
For ever fed with watery supply;
For still he drank, and yet he still was dry.
And moping here did *Hypochondria* sit,
Mother of spleen, in robes of various die,
Who vexed was full oft with ugly fit;
And some her frantic deem'd, and some her deem'd a wit.

LXXVI.

A lady proud she was, of ancient blood,
Yet oft her fear her pride made couchen low:
She felt, or fancied, in her fluttering mood,
All the diseases which the spittles know,
And sought all physic which the shops bestow,
And still new leeches and new drugs would try,
Her humour ever wavering to and fro;
For sometimes she would laugh and sometimes cry;
Then sudden waxed wroth, and all she knew not why.

LXXVII.

Fast by her side a listless maiden pin'd,
With aching head, and squeamish heart-burnings;
Pale, bloated, cold, she seem'd to hate mankind,
Yet lov'd in secret all forbidden things.
And here the *Tertian* shakes his chilling wings;

The sleepless *Gout* here counts the crowing cocks.
A wolf now gnaws him, now a serpent stings;
While *Apoplexy* cramm'd, intemperance knocks
Down to the ground at once as butcher felleth ox.

CANTO II.

The knight of arts and industry,
And his achievements fair;
That, by this castle's overthrow,
Secur'd and crowned were.

I.

Escap'd the castle of the sire of sin,
Ah! where shall I so sweet a dwelling find?
For all around, without, and all within,
Nothing save what delightful was and kind,
Of goodness savouring and a tender mind,
E'er rose to view. But now another strain,
Of doleful note, alas! remains behind:
I now must sing of pleasure turn'd to pain,
And of the false enchanter *Indolence* complain.

II.

Is there no patron to protect the muse,
And fence for her *Parnassus*' barren soil?
To every labour its reward accrues,
And they are sure of bread who swink and moil;
But a fell tribe *th' Aonian hive* despoil,
As ruthless wasps oft rob the painful bee:
Thus while the laws not guard that noblest toil,
Ne for the muses other meed decree,
They praised are alone, and starve right merrily.

III.

I care not, fortune, what you me deny;
You cannot rob me of free nature's grace;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which *Aurora* shows her brightening face;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns, by living stream, at eve:
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the *great children* leave:
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

IV.

Come then, my muse, and raise a bolder song;
Come, lig no more upon the bed of sloth,
Dragging the lazy languid line along,
Fond to begin, but still to finish loth,
Thy half-writ scrolls all eaten by the moth:
Arise, and sing that generous imp of fame,
Who with the sons of softness nobly wroth,
To sweep away this human lumber came,
Or in a chosen few to rouse the slumbering flame.

V.

In *Fairy Land* there liv'd a knight of old,
Of feature stern, *Selvaggio* well yclep'd,
A rough, unpolish'd man, robust and bold,
But wondrous poor: he neither sow'd nor reap'd.
Ne stores in summer for cold winter heap'd:
In hunting all his days away he wore;
Now scorch'd by *June*, now in *November* steep'd,
Now pinch'd by biting *January* sore,
He still in woods pursued the libbard and the boar.

VI.

As he one morning, long before the dawn,
Prick'd through the forest to dislodge his prey,
Deep in the winding bosom of a lawn,
With wood wild-fring'd, he mark'd a taper's ray,
That from the beating rain, and wintry fray,
Did to a lonely cot his steps decoy;
There up to earn the needments of the day,
He found dame *Poverty*, not far nor coy:
Her he compress'd, and fill'd her with a lusty boy.

VII.

Amid the greenwood shade this boy was bred,
And grew at last a knight of muchel fame,
Of active mind and vigorous lustyhed,
The Knight of Arts and Industry by name.
Earth was his bed, the boughs his roof did frame,
He knew no beverage but the flowing stream;
His tasteful well-earn'd food the sylvan game,
Or the brown fruit with which the woodlands teem:
The same to him glad summer, or the winter breme.

VIII.

So pass'd his youthly morning void of care,
Wild as the colts that through the commons run:
For him no tender parents troubled were,
He of the forest seem'd to be the son,
And certes had been utterly undone;
But that *Minerva* pity of him took,
With all the gods that love the rural wonne,
That teach to tame the soil and rule the crook;
Ne did the sacred nine disdain a gentle look.

IX.

Of fertile genius him they nurtur'd well,
In every science, and in every art,
By which mankind the thoughtless brutes excel,
That can or use, or joy, or grace impart,
Disclosing all the powers of head and heart:
Ne were the goodly exercises spar'd,
That brace the nerves, or make the limbs alert,
And mix elastic force with firmness hard:
Was never knight on ground mote be with him compar'd.

X.

Sometimes, with early morn, he mounted gay
The hunter-steed, exulting o'er the dale,
And drew the roseate breath of orient day;
Sometimes, retiring to the secret vale,
Yclad in steel, and bright with burnish'd mail,
He strain'd the bow, or toss'd the sounding spear,
Or darting on the goal outstripp'd the gale,
Or wheel'd the chariot in its mid-career,
Or strenuous wrestled hard with many a tough compeer.

XI.

At other times he pried through nature's store,
Whate'er she in th' ethereal round contains,
Whate'er she hides beneath her verdant floor,
The vegetable and the mineral reigns;
Or else he scann'd the Globe, those small domains,
Where restless mortals such a turmoil keep,
Its seas, its floods, its mountains, and its plains;
But more he search'd the mind, and rous'd from sleep
Those moral seeds whence we heroic actions reap.

XII.

Nor would he scorn to stoop from high pursuits
Of heavenly truth, and practise what she thought.
Vain is the tree of knowledge without fruits.
Sometimes in hand the spade or plough he caught;
Forth-calling all with which boon earth is fraught;
Sometimes he plied the strong mechanic tool,
Or rear'd the fabric from the finest draught;
And oft he put himself to *Neptune's* school,
Fighting with winds and waves on the vext ocean pool.

XIII.

To solace then these rougher toils, he tried
To touch the kindling canvass into life;
With nature his creating pencil vied,
With nature joyous at the mimic strife;
Or, to such shapes as grac'd *Pygmalion's* wife,
He hew'd the marble: or, with varied fire,
He rous'd the trumpet and the martial fife,
Or bade the lute sweet tenderness inspire,
Or verses fram'd that well might wake *Apollo's* lyre.

XIV.

Accomplish'd thus he from the woods issued,
Full of great aims, and bent on bold emprize;
The work, which long he in his breast had brew'd,
Now to perform he ardent did devise;
To wit, a barbarous world to civilize.
Earth was till then a boundless forest wild,
Naught to be seen but savage wood, and skies;
No cities nourish'd arts, no culture smil'd,
No government, no laws, no gentle manners mild.

XV.

A rugged wight, the worst of brutes, was man;
On his own wretched kind he, ruthless, prey'd:
The strongest still the weakest overran;
In every country mighty robbers sway'd,
And guile and ruffian force were all their trade.
Life was a scene of rapine, want, and wo;
Which this brave knight, in noble anger, made
To swear, he would the rascal rout o'erthrow,
For, by the powers divine, it should no more be so!

XVI.

It would exceed the purport of my song,
To say how this *best Sun*, from orient climes
Came beaming life and beauty all along,
Before him chasing indolence and crimes.
Still as he pass'd, the nations he sublimes,
And calls forth arts and virtues with his ray:
Then *Egypt*, *Greece*, and *Rome*, their golden times,
Successive, had; but now in ruins gray
They lie, to slavish sloth and tyranny a prey.

XVII.

To crown his toils, *Sir Industry* then spread
The swelling sail, and made for *Britain's* coast.
A sylvan life till then the natives led,
In the brown shades and green wood forest lost,
All careless rambling where it lik'd them most:
Their wealth the wild-deer bouncing through the glade;
They lodg'd at large, and liv'd at nature's cost;
Save spear and bow withouten other aid;
Yet not the *Roman* steel their naked breast dismay'd.

XVIII.

He lik'd the soil, he lik'd the clement skies,
He lik'd the verdant hills and flowery plains,
Be this my great, my chosen isle (he cries)
This, whilst my labours *Liberty* sustains,
This queen of ocean all assault disdains.
Nor lik'd he less the genius of the land,
To freedom apt, and persevering pains,
Mild to obey, and generous to command,
Temper'd by forming *Heaven* with kindest, firmest hand.

XIX.

Here, by degrees, his master-work arose,
Whatever arts and industry can frame:
Whatever finish'd agriculture knows,
Fair queen of arts! from heaven itself who came,
When *Eden* flourish'd in unspotted fame:
And still with her sweet innocence we find,
And tender peace, and joys without a name,
That, while they ravish, tranquillize the mind:
Nature and art at once, delight and use combin'd.

XX

Then towns he quicken'd by mechanic arts,
And bade the fervent city glow with toil:
Bade social commerce raise renowned marts,
Join land to land, and marry soil to soil,
Unite the poles, and without bloody spoil
Bring home of either *Ind* the gorgeous stores;
Or, should despotic rage the world embroil,
Bade tyrants tremble on remotest shores,
While o'er th' encircling deep *Britannia's* thunder roars.

XXI.

The drooping muses then he westward call'd,
From the fam'd city* by *Propontick* sea,
What time the *Turk* th' enfeebled *Grecian* thrall'd,
Thence from their cloister'd walks he set them free,
And brought them to another *Castalie*,
Where *Isis* many a famous nursling breeds;
Or where old *Cam* soft paces o'er the lea
In pensive mood, and tunes his *Doric* reeds,
The whilst his flocks at large the lonely shepherd feeds.

XXII.

Yet the fine arts were what he finish'd least.
For why? They are the quintessence of all,
The growth of labouring time, and slow increast;
Unless, as seldom chances, it should fall,
That mighty patrons the coy sisters call
Up to the sunshine of uncumber'd ease.
Where no rude care the mounting thought may thrall,
And where they nothing have to do but please:
Ah! gracious God! thou know'st they ask no other fees.

XXIII.

But now, alas! we live too late in time:
Our patrons now even grudge that little claim,
Except to such as sleek the soothing rhyme;
And yet, forsooth, they wear *Mæcenas'* name,
Poor sons of puft-up vanity, not fame,
Unbroken spirits, cheer! still, still remains
Th' *Eternal Patron*, *Liberty;* whose flame,

* Constantinople

While she protects, inspires the noblest strains,
The best, and sweetest far, are toil-created gains.

XXIV.

When as the knight had fram'd, in *Britain-Land*,
A matchless form of glorious government,
In which the sovereign laws alone command,
Laws 'stablished by the public free consent,
Whose majesty is to the sceptre lent,
When this great plan, with each dependent art,
Was settled firm, and to his heart's content,
Then sought he from the toilsome scene to part,
And let life's vacant eve breathe quiet thro' the heart.

XXV.

For this he chose a farm in *Deva's* vale,
Where his long alleys peep'd upon the main.
In this calm seat he drew the healthful gale,
Here mix'd the chief, the patriot, and the swain.
The happy monarch of his sylvan train,
Here, sided by the guardians of the fold,
He walk'd his rounds, and cheer'd his blest domain:
His days, the days of unstain'd nature, roll'd,
Replete with peace and joy, like patriarchs of old.

XXVI.

Witness, ye lowing herds, who gave him milk;
Witness, ye flocks, whose woolly vestments far
Exceed soft *India's* cotton, or her silk;
Witness, with autumn charg'd, the nodding car,
That homeward came beneath sweet evening star,
Or of *September*-moons the radiance mild.

O hide thy head, abominable war!
Of crimes and ruffian idleness the child!
From heaven this life ysprung, from hell thy glories vild.

XXVII.

Nor from his deep retirement banish'd was
Th' amusing care of rural industry.
Still, as with grateful change the seasons pass,
New scenes arise, new landscapes strike the eye;
And all th' enliven'd country beautify:
Gay plains extend where marshes slept before;
O'er recent meads th' exulting streamlets fly;
Dark frowning heaths grow bright with Ceres' store,
And woods imbrown the steep, or wave along the shore.

XXVIII.

As nearer to his farm you made approach,
He polish'd nature with a finer hand.
Yet on her beauties durst not art encroach;
'Tis art's alone the beauties to expand.
In graceful dance immingled, o'er the land,
Pan, *Pales*, *Flora*, and *Pomona* play'd:
Here too brisk gales the rude wild common fann'd,
An happy place; where free, and unafraid,
Amid the flowing brakes each coyer creature stray'd.

XXIX.

But in prime vigour what can last for aye?
That soul-enfeebling wizard *Indolence*,
I whilom sung, wrought in his works decay!
Spread far and wide was *his* curs'd influence;
Of public virtue much *he* dull'd the sense,

Even much of private; eat our spirit out,
And fed our rank luxurious vices; whence
The land was overlaid with many a lout;
Not, as old fame reports, wise, generous, bold, and stout.

XXX.

A rage of pleasure madden'd every breast,
Down to the lowest lees the ferment ran:
To his licentious wish each must be blest,
With joy be fever'd; snatch it as he can.
Thus *Vice* the standard rear'd; her arrier ban
Corruption call'd, and loud she gave the word,
"Mind, mind yourselves! why should the vulgar man
"The lacquey be more virtuous than his lord?
"Enjoy this span of life! 'tis all the gods afford."

XXXI.

The tidings reach'd to where, in quiet hall,
The good old knight enjoy'd well-earn'd repose,
"Come, come, Sir Knight! thy children on thee call:
"Come, save us yet, ere ruin round us close!
"The demon *Indolence* thy toils o'erthrows."
On this the noble colour stain'd his cheeks:
Indignant glowing through the whitening snow
Of venerable eld; his eye-full speaks
His ardent soul, and from his couch at once he breaks.

XXXII.

I will, (he cried,) so help me God! destroy
That villain Archimage.—His page then straight
He to him call'd, a fiery-footed boy,
Benempt *Despatch*. "My steed be at the gate;

"My bard attend; quick, bring the net of fate."
This net was twisted by the sisters three;
Which when once cast o'er harden'd wretch, too late
Repentance comes; replevy cannot be
From the strong iron grasp of vengeful destiny.

XXXIII.

He came, the bard, a little druid-wight,
Of wither'd aspect; but his eye was keen,
With sweetness mix'd. In russet brown bedight,
As is his† sister of the copses green,
He crept along, unpromising of mien.
Gross he who judges so. His soul was fair,
Bright as the children of yon azure sheen.
True comeliness, which nothing can impair,
Dwells in the mind: all else is vanity and glare.

XXXIV.

Come,(quoth the knight,) a voice has reach'd mine ear.
The demon *Indolence* threats overthrow
To all that to mankind is good and dear:
Come *Philomelus;* let us instant go,
O'erturn his bowers, and lay his castle low.
Those men, those wretched men! who will be slaves,
Must drink a bitter wrathful cup of wo:
But some there be, thy song, as from their graves,
Shall raise. Thrice happy he! who without rigour saves

XXXV.

Issuing forth, the knight bestrode his steed,
Of ardent bay, and on whose front a star

Shone blazing bright: sprung from the generous breed
That whirl of active day the rapid car,
He pranc'd along, disdaining gate or bar.
Meantime, the bard on milk-white palfrey rode;
An honest, sober beast, that did not mar
His meditations, but full softly trode:
And much they moraliz'd as thus yfere they yode.

XXXVI.

They talk'd of virtue, and of human bliss;
What else so fit for man to settle well?
And still their long researches met in this,
This *Truth of Truths*, which nothing can refel:
"From virtue's fount the purest joys out-well,
"Sweet rills of thought that cheer the conscious soul:
"While vice pours forth the troubled streams of hell,
"The which, howe'er disguis'd, at last with dole
"Will thro' the tortur'd breast their fiery torrent roll."

XXXVII.

At length it dawn'd, that fatal valley gay,
O'er which high wood-crown'd hills their summits rear.
On the cool height awhile our palmers stay,
And 'spite even of themselves their senses cheer:
Then to the wizard's wonne their steps they steer:
Like a green isle, it broad beneath them spread,
With gardens round, and wandering currents clear,
And tufted groves to shade the meadow-bed,
Sweet airs and song; and without hurry all seem'd glad.

XXXVIII.

" As God shall judge me, knight, we must forgive
(The half-enraptur'd *Philomelus* cried)
" The frail good man deluded here to live,
" And in these groves his musing fancy hide.
" Ah! nought is pure. It cannot be denied,
" That virtue still some tincture has of vice,
" And vice of virtue. What should then betide,
" But that our charity be not too nice?
" Come, let us those we can to real bliss entice."

XXXIX.

" Ay, sicker, (quoth the knight,) all flesh is frail,
" To pleasant sin and joyous dalliance bent:
" But let not brutish vice of this avail,
" And think to 'scape deserved punishment.
" *Justice* were cruel weakly to relent;
" From *Mercy's* self she got her sacred glaive:
" Grace be to those who can, and will, repent;
" But penance, long and dreary, to the slave,
" Who must in floods of fire his gross foul spirit lave."

XL.

Thus, holding high discourse, they came to where
The cursed carle was at his wonted trade;
Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
In witching wise, as I before have said.
But when he saw, in goodly geer array'd,
The grave majestic knight approaching nigh,
And by his side the bard so sage and staid,
His count'nance fell; yet oft his anxious eye
Mark'd them, like wily fox who roosted cock doth spy.

XLI.

Nathless, with feign'd respect, he bade give back
The rabble-rout, and welcom'd them full kind;
Struck with the noble twain, they were not slack
His orders to obey, and fall behind.
Then he resum'd his song; and unconfin'd,
Pour'd all his music, ran through all his strings:
With magic dusk their eyne he tries to blind,
And virtue's tender airs o'er weakness flings.
What pity base his song who so divinely sings!

XLII.

Elate in thought, he counted them his own,
They listen'd so intent with fix'd delight:
But they instead, as if transmew'd to stone,
Marvell'd he could with such sweet art unite
The lights and shades of manners, wrong and right.
Meantime, the silly crowd the charm devour,
Wide pressing to the gate. Swift on the knight
He darted fierce, to drag him to his bower, [power.
Who back'ning shunn'd his touch, for well he knew its

XLIII.

As in throng'd ampitheatre of old,
The wary† *Retiarius* trapp'd his foe;
Even so the knight returning on him bold,
At once involv'd him in the *Net of Wo*,
Whereof I mention made not long ago.
Enrag'd at first, he scorn'd so weak a jail,
And leapt, and flew, and flounced to and fro;

† A gladiator, who made use of a net, which he threw over his adversary.

But when he found that nothing could avail,
He set him felly down and gnaw'd his bitter nail.

XLIV.

Alarm'd, the inferior demons of the place
Rais'd rueful shrieks and hideous yells around;
Black stormy clouds, deform'd the welkin's face,
And from beneath was heard a wailing sound,
As of infernal sprights in cavern bound;
A solemn sadness every creature strook,
And lightnings flash'd, and horror rock'd the ground:
Huge crowds on crowds out pour'd, with blemish'd look,
As if on time's last verge this frame of things had shook.

XLV.

Soon as the short-liv'd tempest was yspent,
Steam'd from the jaws of vext Avernus' hole,
And hush'd the hubbub of the rabblement,
Sir *Industry* the first calm moment stole.
"There must, (he cried,) amid so vast a shoal,
"Be some who are not tainted at the heart,
"Not poison'd quite by this same villain's bowl:
"Come then, my bard, thy heavenly fire impart;
"Touch soul with soul, till forth the latent spirit start."

XLVI.

The bard obey'd; and taking from his side,
Where it in seemly sort depending hung,
His *British* harp, its speaking strings he tried,
The which with skilful touch he deftly strung,
Till tinkling in clear symphony they rung.

Then, as he felt the muses come along,
Light o'er the chords his raptur'd hand he flung,
And play'd a prelude to his rising song: [throng.
The whilst, like midnight mute, ten thousand round him

XLVII.

Thus ardent burst his strain.———

" Ye hapless race,
" Dire-labouring here to smother reason's ray,
" That lights our Maker's image in our face,
" And gives us wide o'er earth unquestion'd sway;
" What is th' ador'd *supreme Perfection*, say?
" What, but eternal never-resting soul,
" Almighty power, and all-directing day;
" By whom each atom stirs, the planets roll;
" Who fills, surrounds, informs, and agitates the whole.

XLVIII.

" Come, to the beaming *God* your hearts unfold!
" Draw from its fountain life! 'Tis thence, alone,
" We can excel. Up from unfeeling mould,
" To seraphs burning round th' *Almighty's* throne,
" Life rising still on life, in higher tone,
" Perfection forms, and with perfection bliss.
" In universal nature this clear shown,
" Not needeth proof; to prove it were, I wis,
" To prove the beauteous world excels the brute abyss.

XLIX.

" Is not the field, with lively culture green,
" A sight more joyous than the dead morass?
" Do not the skies with activ ether clean,

" And fann'd by sprightly Zephyrs, far surpass
" The foul November-fogs, and slumberous mass,
" With which sad nature veils her drooping face?
" Does not the mountain-stream, as clear as glass,
" Gay-dancing on, the putrid pool disgrace?
" The same in all holds true, but chief in human race.

L.

" It was not by vile loitering and ease,
" That *Greece* obtain'd the brighter palm of art,
" That soft yet ardent *Athens* learn'd to please,
" To keen the wit, and to sublime the heart,
" In all supreme! complete in every part!
" It was not thence majestic *Rome* arose,
" And o'er the nations shook her conquering dart:
" For sluggard's brow the laurel never grows;
" Renown is not the child of indolent repose.

LI.

" Had unambitious mortals minded nought,
" But in loose joy their time to wear away;
" Had they alone the lap of dalliance sought,
" Pleas'd on her pillow their dull heads to lay,
" Rude nature's state had been our state to-day:
" No cities e'er their towery fronts had rais'd,
" No arts had made us opulent and gay;
" With brother-brutes the human race had graz'd;
" None e'er had soar'd to fame, none honour'd been, none prais'd.

LII.

" Great *Homer's* song had never fir'd the breast
" To thirst of glory, and heroic deeds;
" Sweet *Maro's* muse, sunk in inglorious rest,
" Had silent slept amid the *Mincian* reeds:
" The wits of modern time had told their beads,
" And monkish legends been their only strains;
" Our *Milton's Eden* had laid wrapt in weeds, [swains,
" Our *Shakspeare* stroll'd and laugh'd with *Warwick*
" Ne had my master *Spenser* charm'd his *Mulla's* plains.

LIII.

" Dumb too had been the sage historic muse,
" And perish'd all the sons of ancient fame;
" Those starry lights of virtue, that diffuse
" Through the dark depth of time their vivid flame,
" Had all been lost with such as have no name.
" Who then had scorn'd his ease for other's good?
" Who then had toil'd rapacious men to tame?
" Who in the public breach devoted stood,
" And for his country's cause been prodigal of blood?

LIV.

" But should to fame your hearts unfeeling be,
" If right I read, you pleasure all require:
" Then hear how best may be obtain'd this fee,
" How best enjoy'd this nature's wide desire.
" Toil, and be glad! let industry inspire
" Into your quicken'd limbs her buoyant breath!
" Who does not act is dead: absorpt entire
" In miry sloth, no pride, no joy he hath:
" O leaden-hearted men, to be in love with death!

LV.

" Ah! what avail the largest gifts of *Heaven*,
" When drooping health and spirits go amiss?
" How tasteless then whatever can be given?
" Health is the vital principle of bliss,
" And exercise of health. In proof of this,
" Behold the wretch, who slugs his life away,
" Soon swallow'd in disease's sad abyss:
" While he whom toil has brac'd, or manly play,
" Has light as air each limb, each thought as clear as day.

LVI.

" O who can speak the vigorous joys of health!
" Unclogg'd the body, unobscur'd the mind:
" The morning rises gay, with pleasing stealth,
" The temperate evening falls serene and kind.
" In health the wiser brutes true gladness find.
" See! how the younglings frisk along the meads
" As *May* comes on, and wakes the balmy wind;
" Rampant with life, their joy all joy exceeds:
" Yet what but high-strung health this dancing pleasaunce breeds?

LVII.

" But here, instead, is foster'd every ill,
" Which or distemper'd minds or bodies know.
" Come then, my kindred spirits! do not spill
" Your talents here. This place has but a show,
" Whose charms delude you to the den of wo:
" Come, follow me, I will direct you right,
" Where pleasure's roses, void of serpents, grow,

" Sincere as sweet; come, follow this good knight,
" And you will bless the day that brought him to your sight.

LVIII.

" Some he will lead to courts, and some to camps;
" To senates some, and public sage debates,
" Where, by the solemn gleam of midnight-lamps,
" The world is pois'd, and manag'd mighty states;
" To high discovery some, that new-creates
" The face of earth; some to the thriving mart,
" Some to the rural reign, and softer fates;
" To the sweet muses some, who raise the heart:
" All glory shall be yours, all nature, and all art.

LIX.

" There are, I see, who listen to my lay,
" Who wretched sigh for virtue, but despair:
" All may be done, (methinks I hear them say,)
" Even death despis'd by generous actions fair;
" All but for those who to these bowers repair,
" Their every power dissolv'd in luxury,
" To quit of torpid sluggishness the lair,
" And from the powerful arms of sloth get free.
" 'Tis rising from the dead—Alas!—it cannot be!

LX.

" Would you then learn to dissipate the band
" Of these huge threatening difficulties dire,
" That in the weak man's way like lions stand,
" His soul appal, and damp his rising fire?
" Resolve, resolve, and to be men aspire.

" Exert that noblest privilege, alone,
" Here to mankind indulg'd: control desire;
" Let godlike reason, from her sovereign throne,
" Speak the commanding word—*I will!* and it is done.

LXI.

" Heavens! can you then thus waste, in shameful wise
" Your few important days of trial here?
" Heirs of eternity! yborn to rise
" Through endless states of being, still more near
" To bliss approaching, and perfection clear,
" Can you renounce a fortune so sublime,
" Such glorious hopes, your backward steps to steer,
" And roil, with vilest brutes, through mud and slime?
" No! no! Your heaven-touch'd hearts disdain the sordid crime!"

LXII.

" Enough, enough!" they cried: straight from the crowd
The better sort on wings of transport fly:
As when amid the lifeless summits proud
Of *Alpine* cliffs, where to the gelid sky
Snows pil'd on snows in wintry torpor lie,
The rays divine of vernal *Phœbus* play:
Th' awaken'd heaps, in streamlets from on high,
Rous'd into action, lively leap away,
Glad warbling through the vales, in their new being gay.

LXIII.

Not less the life, the vivid joy serene,
That lighted up these new created men,
Than that which wings th' exulting spirit clean,
When just deliver'd from this fleshy den,

It soaring seeks its native skies agen:
How light its essence! how unclogg'd its powers,
Beyond the blazon of my mortal pen!
Even so we glad forsook these sinful bowers,
Even such enraptur'd life, such energy was ours.

LXIV.

But far the greater part, with rage inflam'd,
Dire-mutter'd curses, and blasphem'd high Jove.
"Ye sons of hate! (they bitterly exclaim'd)
"What brought you to this seat of peace and love?
"While with kind nature here, amid the grove,
"We pass'd the harmless sabbath of our time,
"What to disturb it could, fell men, remove
"Your barbarous hearts! Is happiness a crime?
"Then do the fiends of hell rule in yon heaven sublime."

LXV.

"Ye impious wretches," (quoth the knight in wrath)
"Your happiness behold!"—Then straight a wand
He wav'd, on anti-magic power that hath,
Truth from illusive falsehood to command,
Sudden the landskip sinks on every hand;
The pure quick streams are marshy puddles found;
On baleful heaths the groves all blacken'd stand;
And o'er the weedy foul abhorred ground, [around
Snakes, adders, toads, each loathsome creature crawls

LXVI.

And here and there, on trees by lightning scath'd,
Unhappy wights who loathed life yhung;

Or, in fresh gore and recent murder bath'd,
They weltering lay; or else, infuriate flung
Into the gloomy flood, while ravens sung
The funeral dirge, they down the torrent roll'd:
These by distemper'd blood to madness stung, [troll'd
Had doom'd themselves: whence oft, when night con-
The world, returning hither their sad spirits howl'd.

LXVII.

Meantime a moving scene was open laid;
That lazar-house, I whilom in my lay
Depainted have, its horrors deep display'd,
And gave unnumber'd wretches to the day,
Who tossing there in squalid misery lay.
Soon as of sacred light th' unwonted smile
Pour'd on these living catacombs its ray,
Through the drear caverns stretching many a mile,
The sick up-rais'd their heads and dropp'd their woes
a while.

LXVIII.

"O heaven! (they cried) and do we once more see
"Yon blessed sun and this green earth so fair?
"Are we from noisome damps of pest-house free?
"And drink our souls the sweet ethereal air?
"O thou! or knight, or god! who holdest there
"That fiend, O, keep him in eternal chains!
"But what for us, the children of despair,
"Brought to the brink of hell, what hope remains?
"Repentance does itself but aggravate our pains.

LXIX.

The gentle knight, who saw their rueful case,
Let fall adown his silver beard some tears.
" Certes (quoth he) it is not even in grace,
" T' undo the past, and eke your broken years;
" Nathless, to nobler worlds repentance rears,
" With humble hope her eye; to her is given
" A power the truly contrite heart that cheers;
" She quells the brand by which the rocks are riven,
" She more than merely softens, she rejoices *Heaven.*

LXX.

" Then patient bear the sufferings you have earn'd,
" And by these sufferings purify the mind:
" Let wisdom be by past misconduct learn'd:
" Or pious die, with penitence resign'd;
" And to a life more happy and refin'd,
" Doubt not, you shall, new creatures, yet arise.
" Till then you may expect in me to find
" One who will wipe your sorrow from your eyes,
" One who will sooth your pangs, and wing you to the skies!"

LXXI.

They silent heard, and pour'd their thanks in tears:
" For you (resum'd the knight with sterner tone)
" Whose hard dry hearts th' obdurate demon sears,
" That villain's gifts will cost you many a groan;
" In dolorous mansion long you must bemoan
" His fatal charms, and weep your stains away;
" Till, soft and pure as infant goodness grown,
" You feel a perfect change: then, who can say, [day."
" What grace may yet shine forth in heaven's eternal

LXXII.

This said, his powerful wand he wav'd anew;
Instant, a glorious angel-train descends,
The Charities, to wit, of rosy hue,
Sweet love their looks a gentle radiance lends,
And with seraphic flame compassion blends.
At once, delighted, to their charge they fly;
When lo! a goodly hospital ascends;
In which they bade each lenient aid be nigh,
That could the sick-bed smooth of that sad company.

LXXIII.

It was a worthy edifying sight,
And gives to human kind peculiar grace,
To see kind hands attending day and night,
With tender ministry, from place to place.
Some prop the head; some, from the pallid face
Wipe off the faint cold dews weak nature sheds;
Some reach the healing draught: the whilst, to chase
The fear supreme, around their soften'd beds,
Some holy man by prayer all opening heaven dispreads.

LXXIV.

Attended by a glad acclaiming train,
Of those he rescued had from gaping hell,
Then turn'd the Knight; and to his hall again
Soft-pacing, sought of peace the mossy cell:
Yet down his cheeks the gems of pity fell,
To see the helpless wretches that remain'd,
There left through delves and deserts dire to yell;
Amaz'd their looks with pale dismay were stain'd,
And spreading wide their hands, they meek repentance feign'd.

LXXV.

But ah! their scorned day of grace was past;
For (horrible to tell) a desert wild
Before them stretch'd, bare, comfortless, and vast,
With gibbets, bones, and carcasses defil'd.
There nor trim field, nor lively culture smil'd!
Nor waving shade was seen, nor fountain fair;
But sands abrubt on sands lay loosely pil'd, [care,
Through which they floundering toil'd with painful
Whilst *Phœbus* smote them sore, and fir'd the cloudless air.

LXXVI.

Then varying to a joyless land of bogs,
The saddend'd country a gray waste appear'd;
Where nought but putrid streams and noisome fogs
For ever hung on drizzly *Auster's* beard;
Or else the ground by piercing *Caurus* sear'd
Was jagg'd with frost, or heap'd with glazed snow.
Thro' these extremes a ceaseless round they steer'd,
By cruel fiends still hurried to and fro,
Gaunt *Beggary*, and *Scorn*, with many hell-hounds moe.

LXXVII.

The first was with base dunghill rags yclad,
Tainting the gale, in which they flutter'd light;
Of morbid hue his features, sunk, and sad;
His hallow eyne shook forth a sickly light;
And o'er his lank jaw-bone, in piteous plight,
His black rough beard was matted rank and vile;
Direful to see! an heart-appalling sight!

Meantime foul scurf and blotches him defile
And dogs, where'er he went, still barked all the while.

LXXVIII.

The other was a fell despiteful fiend:
Hell holds none worse in baleful bower below;
By pride, and wit, and rage, and rancour keen'd;
Of man alike, if good or bad, the foe;
With nose up-turn'd, he always made a show,
As if he felt some nauseous scent; his eye
Was cold, and keen, like blast from boreal snow;
And taunts he casten forth most bitterly.
Such were the twain that off drove this ungodly fry.

LXXIX.

Even so through *Brentford* town, a town of mud,
An herd of bristly swine is prick'd along;
The filthy beasts, that never chew the cud,
Still grunt, and squeak, and sing their troublous song,
And oft they plunge themselves the mire among:
But aye the ruthless driver goads them on,
And aye of barking dogs the bitter throng
Makes them renew their unmelodious moan;
Ne ever find they rest from their unresting fone.

THE END.

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